MANORAMA

TELL ME WHY

No:114

WORLD CLASSICS IN LITERATURE

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PHOTO QUIZ INSIDE! **SOLAR ROBOT** FOR LUCKY WINNERS

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From the house of
TELL ME WHY

Turn to the back cover inside

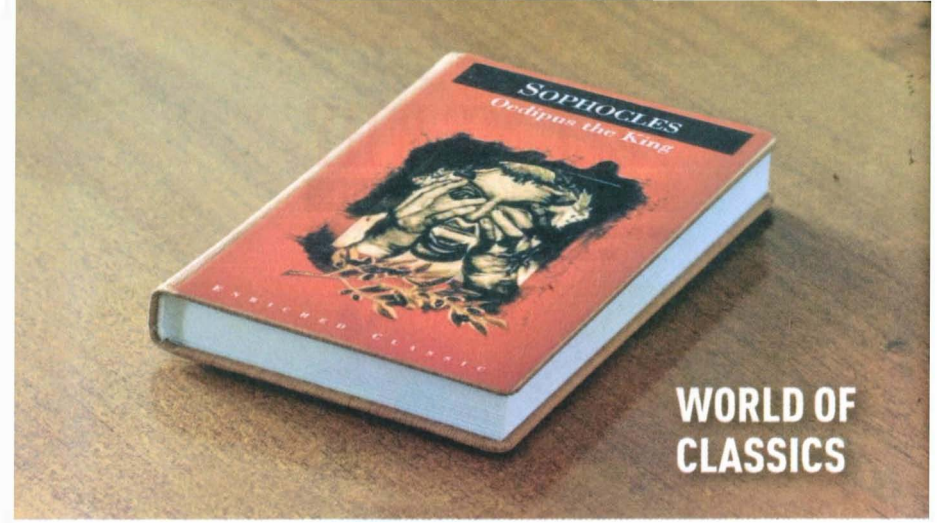
MANORAMA
TELL ME WHY
March 2016 • Volume: 10 • No: 3
FROM THE HOUSE OF MAGIC POT, THE WEEK, MANORAMA YEARBOOK, VANITHA & THE MALAYALA MANORAMA DAILY

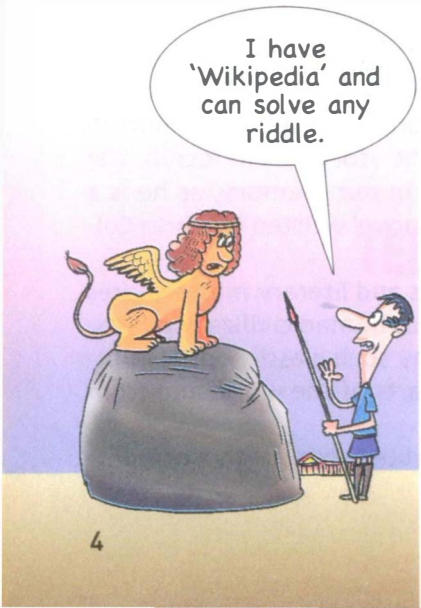
BOOKS THAT LIVE FOR EVER

Many children lie, and get punished. Very soon it is forgotten, too. Not so, the punishment Pinnochio got for lying. It is etched in the minds of children across the world. For each lie Pinnochio said his nose would grow longer. The story of Pinnochio, the naughty wooden puppet, never dies in our memory, as he is a character immortalised in the classic novel written by Carlo Collodi.

There are many such stories, poems and literary masterpieces that will live on in our minds, as long as human civilization lasts. These are the classics. There are many such classic works in literature, originating from different parts of the world and from various times in history.

This issue of Tell Me Why tells you about some of those important works in world literature.



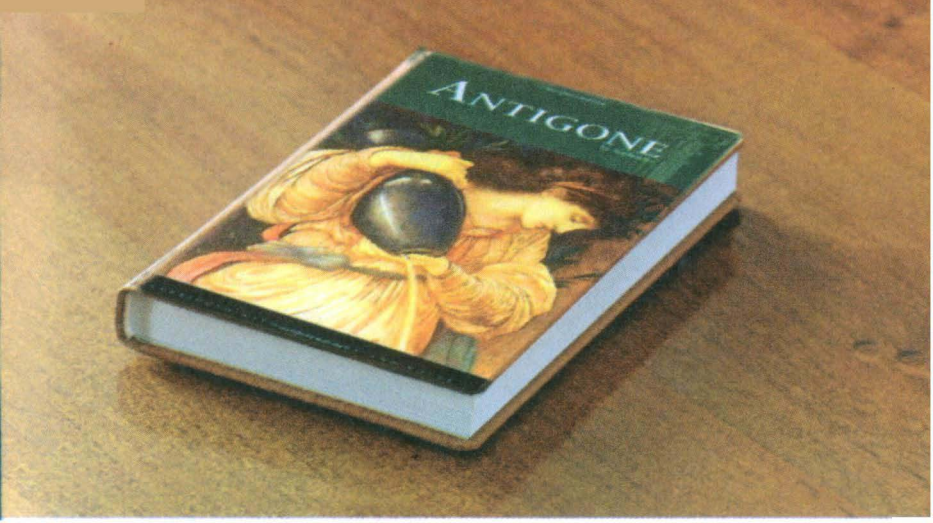


Why is 'Oedipus the King', regarded as a masterpiece of Sophocles?

'Oedipus the King', is a strange classic. Oedipus saves Thebes from the terrifying sphinx. However, it was prophesied that he would marry Jocasta, his mother, after murdering Laius, his father.

The prophecy comes true. Though Oedipus becomes King of Thebes, he knows the dark secret that he is the murderer of his father, and the husband of his mother. He wishes to be blinded.

The story of Oedipus the tragic hero, is the masterpiece of Sophocles. Aristotle praised the play in his poetics. He regarded it as the classic example of Greek tragedy.



Antigone

Sophocles wrote three Thebian plays about Oedipus. Oedipus the King is the second of these. This play was first performed about 429 BC in Athens. This great classic tragedy is also known by its Latin name, Oedipus Rex.

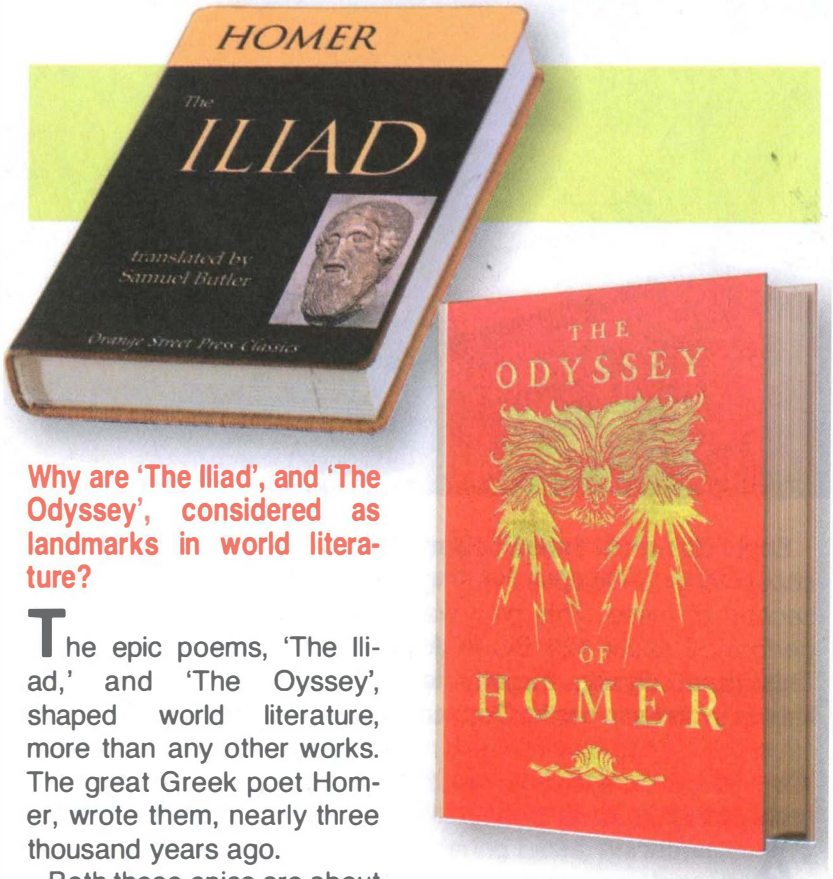
Why is 'Antigone', by Sophocles regarded as an all-time classic?

'Antigone', was written by Sophocles. According to experts, Sophocles authored 'Antigone', on, or before, 441 BC. Interestingly, though this classic is the third of his three Thebian plays, Sophocles wrote it first.

The play reveals more about the workings of Oedipus and his family. Anitgone, the princess, is the principal character in the play, and Creon is a tyrannical king. Sophocles shows through the character of Creon, the perils of absolute power.

Characters and themes are central to this play. Nationalism is given importance in the play. However, no political ideology is promoted in 'Antigone'. This is surprising, as Sophocles wrote it during a time of imperialism.

Sophocles himself was made one of the ten generals, and asked to lead the army against Samos, shortly after the play was first staged.



The Iliad and The Odyssey

Why are 'The Iliad', and 'The Odyssey', considered as landmarks in world literature?

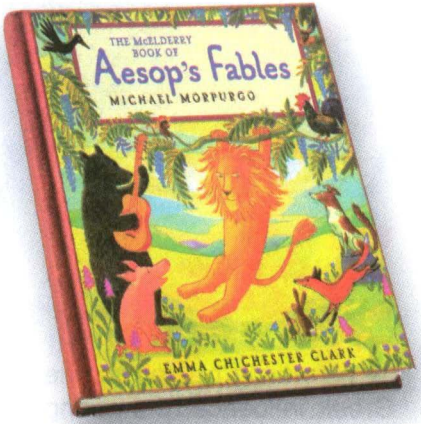
The epic poems, 'The Iliad,' and 'The Oyssey', shaped world literature, more than any other works. The great Greek poet Homer, wrote them, nearly three thousand years ago.

Both these epics are about Greek gods and heroic men. The Trojan War forms the backdrop of 'The Iliad'. 'The Odyssey' is a sequel to 'The Iliad'. It describes in detail, the voyage of the conquering heroes to their homeland. The word 'odyssey' has come to mean a long and adventurous journey.

'The Iliad', and 'The Odyssey', capture in words, the rise to power of the Greeks in the Western world. Writers still follow some of the literary conventions laid down in these classics. Homer has influenced generations of writers and readers.

Book of the Dead

'The Book of the Dead', is a book of magic spells. The Ancient Egyptians treasured the 'Book of the Dead'.



Aesop's Fables

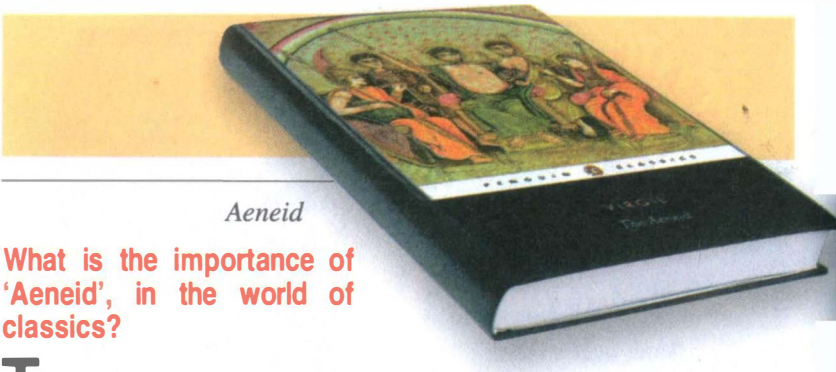
Why are 'Aesop's fables', so popular among children?

Aesop was a Greek slave, but his talent for telling stories won him freedom.

Aesop travelled widely, narrating his stories. Each of his stories had a moral. They teach about life, and aid in the building of character.

Aesop narrated his fables around 620 BC. They were passed down by word of mouth, for many generations. Aesop's fables were first written down in 320 BC. Roman scholars learned the Latin translation of these fables.

These simple tales, with animal characters, remain a child's delight, and are among the most widely read stories in the world.



Aeneid

What is the importance of 'Aeneid', in the world of classics?

The writing of Homer, the Greek, influenced the writing of Virgil, the author of 'Aeneid'.

Aeneas, the principal character of 'Aeneid', appears in Homer's Iliad. Aeneas was a part of the Greco-Roman legend long before Virgil was born.

In Homer's Iliad, Aeneas is portrayed as a wanderer with a loose link to the beginnings of Rome. Virgil's Aeneas too, is a Trojan who journeyed to Italy, and became the Father of the Romans.

'Aeneid', is a Latin epic poem in twelve books. The adventurous journey of Aeneas from Troy to Italy is described in the first six books. The second part of the book deals with the Trojan hero's triumph over the Latins. Virgil authored 'Aeneid', between 29 and 19 BC.

Homer's Iliad

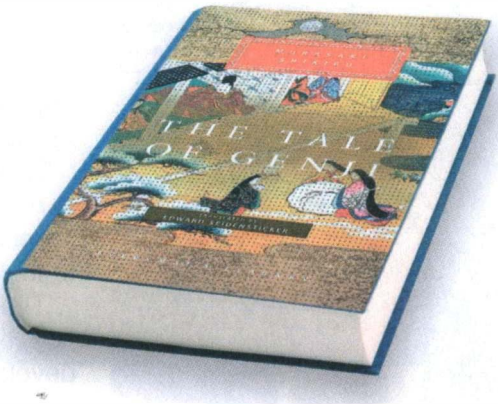
Aeneas is a common factor in Greek and Roman mythology. He is a great mythological creature in Greek mythology and the first true hero in Roman mythology. Aeneas also found a place in Homer's Iliad.

What makes 'The Tale of Genji' a unique literary work?

'The Tale of Genji', was written by Murasaki Shikibu, who was a noble-woman in eleventh century Japan.

Murasaki Shikibu lost her husband at a young age, and became lady-in-waiting to the Empress. For two years, she wrote of her experience in the court, in a diary. Her novel 'The Tale of Genji' revolves around the handsome Hikaru Genji, an offspring of the Emperor.

Along with the life, and the love life of Hikaru Genji, the lifestyles of the high courtiers of the Heian period are also brilliantly narrated in the novel. This masterpiece has been translated into many languages. 'The Tale of Genji', is sometimes called the world's first novel. It is also regarded as the first psychological novel.



The Tale of Genji

Why is Dante's 'Divine Comedy', considered as a masterpiece?

Dante Alighieri was nearing the end of his life when he began writing the 'Divine Comedy'.

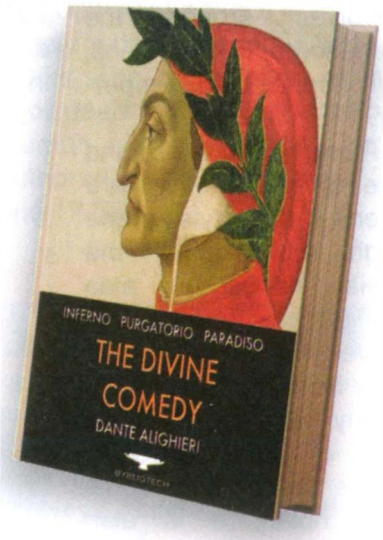
Statue of Dante

'The Divine Comedy', came to be regarded as a magnificent work of world literature. In 1321, shortly after completing his masterpiece, Dante Alighieri passed away.

Dante's incredible travels through hell, purgatory, and paradise are narrated in the poem. During his sojourn, Dante meets many fascinating characters. Dante turned his friends, foes, and folk of the time into characters. Some characters were also drawn from Ancient Roman history.

Dante gave the title, 'Comedia', to his work. Later, Giovanni Boccaccio added the word 'Divina', to the title.

'The Divine Comedy', played a key role in the history of the development of the Italian language. This epic poem is the premier work of Italian literature. The literary tradition of Europe owes a lot to Dante, and his 'Divine Comedy'.



Divine Comedy

A Painting based on a tale from the Decameron

Why is 'Decameron', a classic of the time?

'Decameron', was a classic of its time. In 1348, Black Death struck Italy. This dangerous disease inspired Giovanni Boccaccio to write the 'Decameron.'

In the 'Decameron', seven young women, and three young men take refuge from the epidemic in an isolated villa outside Florence. They tell a hundred stories. These stories were written in the Florentine language spoken during that time. With the 'Decameron', classical early Italian prose touched new heights.

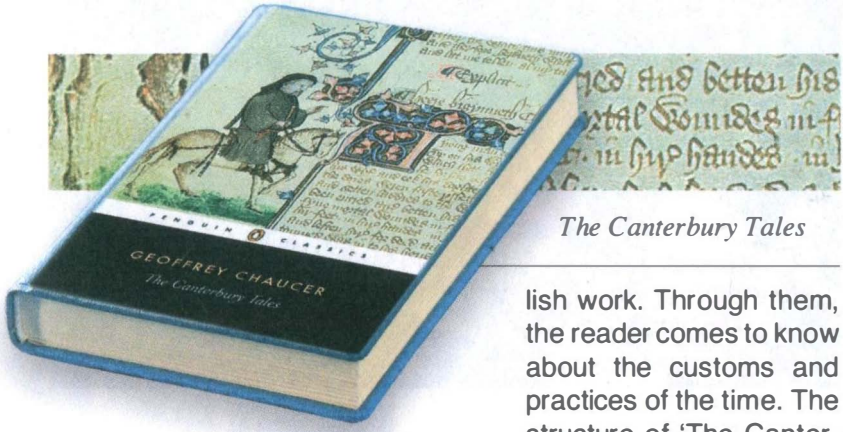
'Decameron', is a collection of novellas, and it is subtitled 'Prince Galehaut'. 'Decameron', means ten days in Greek. The characters take ten days to relate their stories.

Boccaccio completed the Decameron in 1353. The Decameron influenced latter-day writers. Notable among them was Geoffrey Chaucer.

Why are 'The Canterbury Tales', considered as a landmark in English literature?

Geoffrey Chaucer was the author of 'The Canterbury Tales'. Rightly regarded as a masterpiece, 'The Canterbury Tales', has delighted generations of readers down the ages.

The tales comprises of twenty four stories, in over 17,000



The Canterbury Tales

lines of Middle English. In the book, a group of pilgrims travel to the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. They pass the time by conducting a storytelling contest.

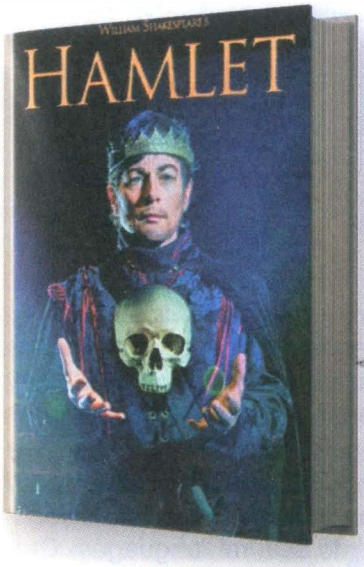
Chaucer presents his stories as the stories told by these pilgrims. The stories take an ironical and critical look at the Church, and at English society, during Chaucer's time. Never before had such a wide range of characters appeared in an English work. Through them, the reader comes to know about the customs and practices of the time. The structure of 'The Canterbury Tales', is similar to that of the 'Decameron'.

What made 'Hamlet' one of the most loved plays in the world?

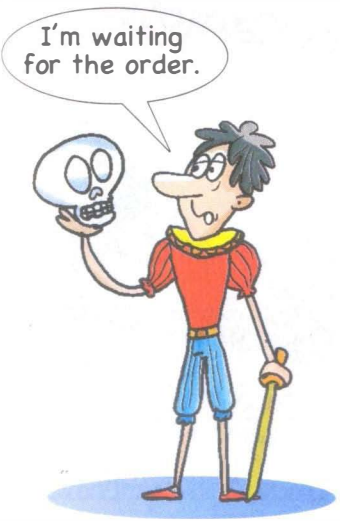
The great William Shakespeare wrote 'Hamlet', one of the great tragedies of English literature. Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, is the son of

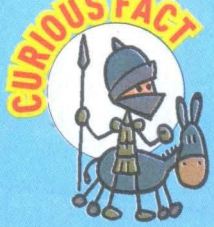
Troilus and Cressida

'Troilus and Cressida', is a long poem penned by Geoffrey Chaucer. Published in 1383, it is a tragedy set in the time of the Trojan War. The characters are life-like, and the poem gained a special place in English literature.



Hamlet





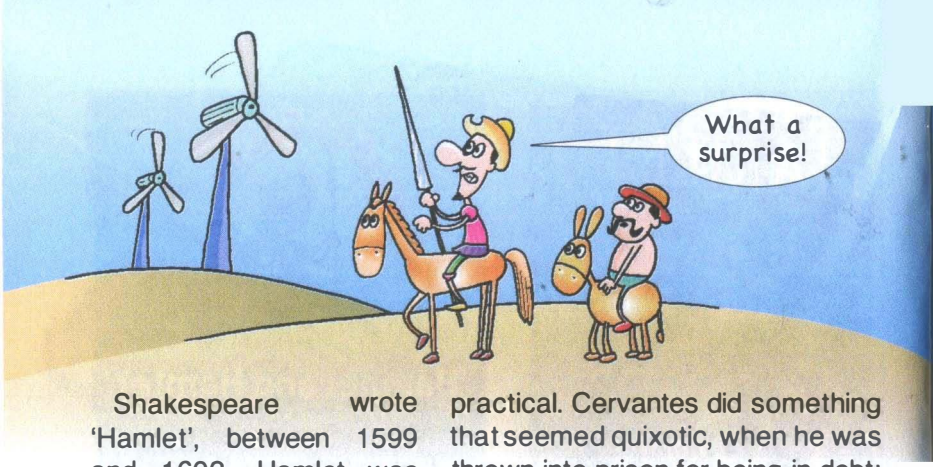
Hamnet and Hamlet

William Shakespeare had a son named Hamnet who died as a child, at the age of eleven. Some experts found a connection between his death, and the play called Hamlet. Other critics dismiss this as a mere coincidence.

King Hamlet. However, King Hamlet is murdered by his treacherous brother, Claudius.

Claudius ascends the throne, and marries the widow of King Hamlet. The ghost of the murdered king calls upon Prince Hamlet to wreak revenge on Claudius.

Hamlet is believed to have been inspired by the legend of Amleth. Though it is often known as Hamlet, the original title of the play is 'The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.'

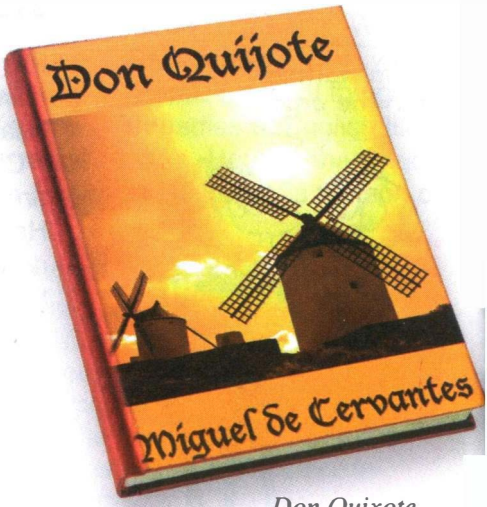


Shakespeare wrote 'Hamlet', between 1599 and 1602. Hamlet was Shakespeare's most popular play during his lifetime.

It is among his most performed plays. The play has invited critical and psychological studies. 'Hamlet', is also the most filmed story after Cinderella. Writers of the calibre of Goethe, and Joyce have been inspired by 'Hamlet'.

Why is 'Don Quixote', regarded as the first modern novel?

Cervantes gave the world 'The Adventures of Don Quixote', and also the word 'quixotic'. Quixotic means having ideas that are imaginative, but, not practical. Cervantes did something that seemed quixotic, when he was thrown into prison for being in debt; he began to write 'Don Quixote'. The book proved to be a surprise winner. The characters were loved by readers and the book was translated into several languages. Cervantes was no longer poor.



Don Quixote

Written more than four hundred years ago in Spain, Don Quixote came to be regarded as the first modern novel.

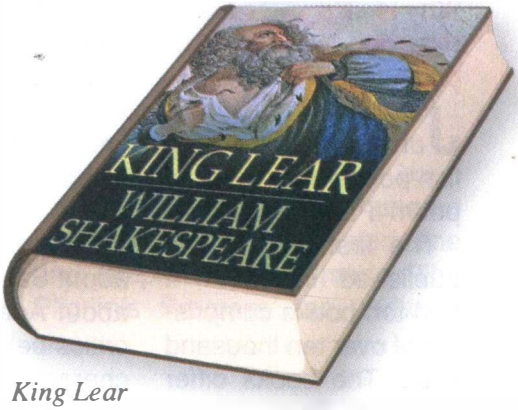
Up until then, fiction was about brave knights and handsome heroes. Cervantes wrote in simple language about an ordinary man named Don Quixote, who wished to be a knight.

Don Quixote and his loyal squire Sancho Panza have many funny or fantastic adventures together. 'Don Quixote', has been enjoyed by millions of readers down the ages.

Why is 'King Lear', considered as one of the greatest tragedies ever written?

'King Lear', is a royal tragedy penned by William Shakespeare. Shakespeare was inspired by the legend of the mythological King Leir of Britain. It is believed that 'The Chronicles of England, Scotlande and Irelande', by Raphael Holinshed published in 1587, was Shakespeare's principal source.

Shakespeare authored the play in1605 or 1606, and it was probably first staged on Saint Stephen's Day in 1606. King Lear has been staged



King Lear

thousands of times round the world. King Lear has also been made into movies, and several great actors have played the role of the tragic king.

In the play, King Lear is flattered by his two elder daughters. The king disposes of his kingdom in their favour. The ingratitude of his two elder daughters drives King Lear to madness. Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature makes the play remarkable and relevant.

Verbless Novel !

Michel Thaler did the unthinkable. He wrote a novel titled Le Train de Nulle Part. This French novel has 233 pages, but not even a single verb.

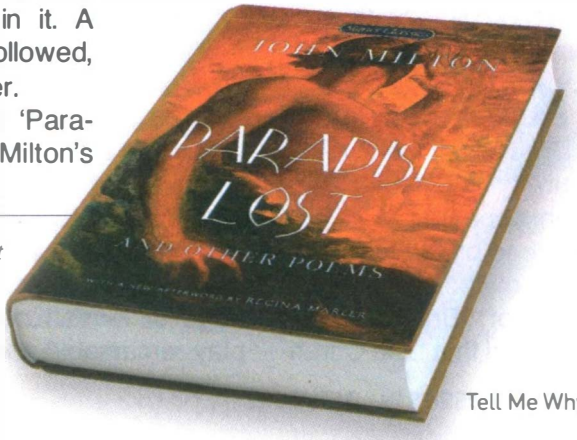
Why is 'Paradise Lost', regarded as a masterpiece?

John Milton, the English poet, wrote the epic poem 'Paradise Lost'.

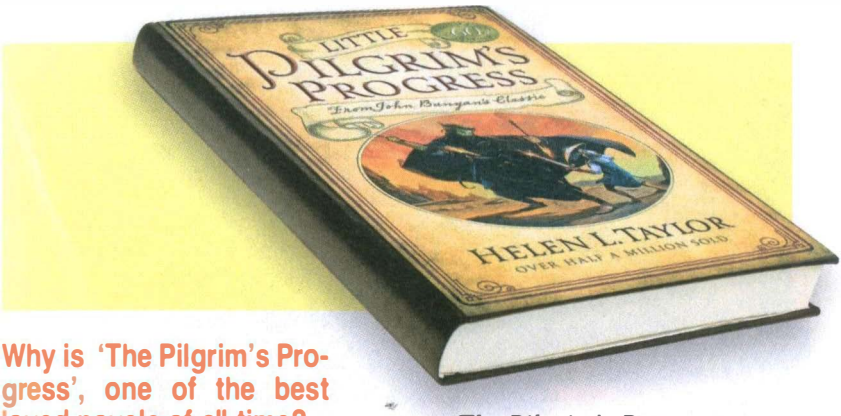
The first edition was published in 1667. It had ten books comprising of over ten thousand lines. The books differ in length. Book IX has 1,189 lines while Book VII, the shortest has only 640 lines in it. A second edition followed, seven years later.

Critics regard 'Paradise Lost', as Milton's magnum opus, or best work. The poem focuses on the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Satan who is a fallen angel, tempts Eve with the fruit of knowledge. Adam and Eve are banished forever from the Garden of Eden.

The poem has two narratives, one about Satan or Lucifer, and the other about Adam and Eve. Some literary critics believe that Satan is the main character of the poem. 'Paradise Lost', won John Milton lasting fame as a great poet.



Paradise Lost



The Pilgrim's Progress

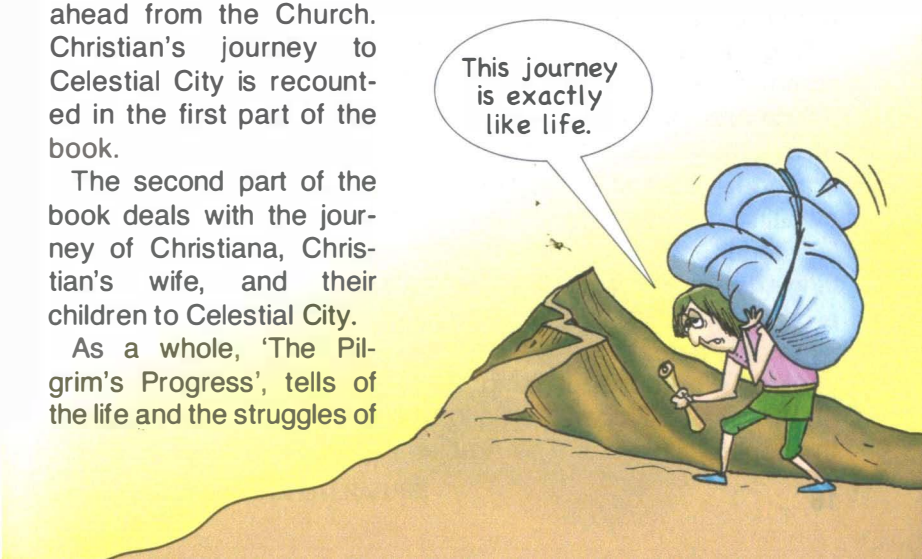
Why is 'The Pilgrim's Progress', one of the best loved novels of all time?

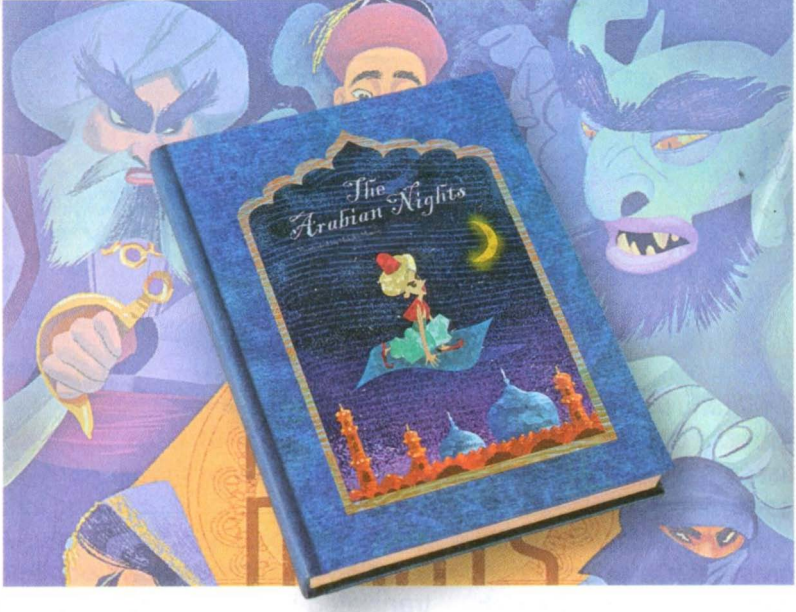
'The Pilgrim's Progress', is a prison novel. John Bunyan, the Englishman wrote the novel after he was imprisoned for preaching the gospel.

Bunyan had preached without getting the go-ahead from the Church. Christian's journey to Celestial City is recounted in the first part of the book.

The second part of the book deals with the journey of Christiana, Christian's wife, and their children to Celestial City.

As a whole, 'The Pilgrim's Progress', tells of the life and the struggles of a believer. The book has been translated into more than hundred languages. The unique story line and simple narration made 'The Pilgrim's Progress', an enduring classic.





One Thousand and One Nights

Why is 'One Thousand and One Nights', one of its kind?

'One Thousand and One Nights', is an enchanting collection of stories and folk tales from Arabia.

Originally written in Arabic, this classic is commonly known as 'The Arabian Nights'.

'The Arabian Nights', begins with the story of the ruler Shahryar and his wife Scheherazade. When she discovers that death is awaiting her in the morning, Scheherazade tell stories to the king. Her telling distracts the king and saves her life. It is often regarded as a work that shows, man's unending will to overcome defeat.

'Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp', and 'The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor', are among the popular stories of 'The Arabian Nights'.

Why has 'Robinson Crusoe', by Daniel Defoe become one of the widely read books?

Daniel Defoe authored 'Robinson Crusoe', in 1719. The book was an instant bestseller. Six editions of the book came out within the first four months of its publication.

The shipwrecked Robinson Crusoe is the central character of the book. Storms guns, ships, and cannibals feature in this thrilling adventure.

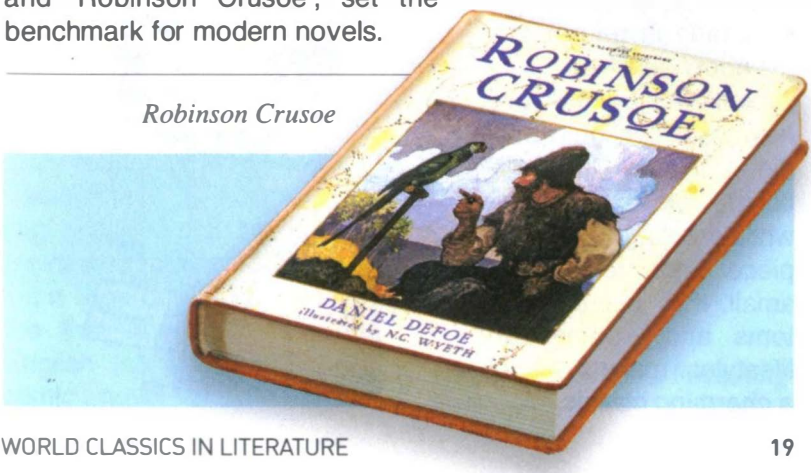
Man's wish to be alone, as well as his desire for friendship and his amazing ability to survive in hostile conditions, are highlighted in this novel. Defoe was an Englishman. He gave insights into middle class values in the book.

Defoe wrote in a realistic style, and 'Robinson Crusoe', set the benchmark for modern novels.

Whither Author?

'Robinson Crusoe', was presented as a true-to-life tale when it was first published in 1719. Crusoe was credited as the author of the book. Defoe's name did not appear in the book.

Robinson Crusoe



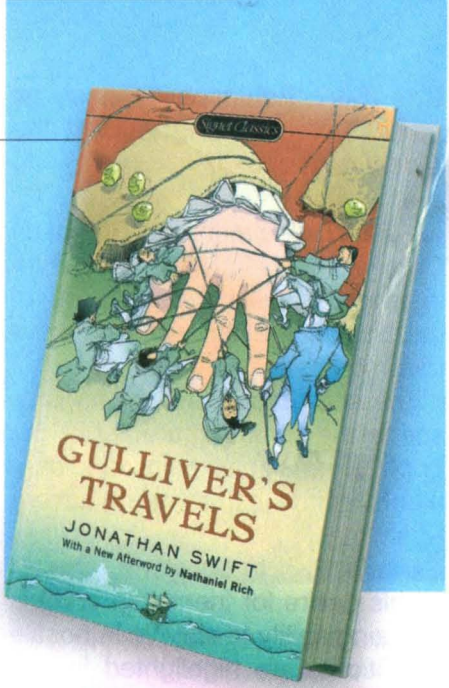
Why is 'Gulliver's Travels', considered a classic of world literature?

Jonathan Swift wrote 'Gulliver's Travels', and it swiftly became a classic of English literature.

'Gulliver's Travels', was first published in 1726. Lemuel Gulliver is a ship's surgeon. He is washed upon the shores of Lilliput, the land of little people.

The Lilliputians regard Gulliver as a giant. Gulliver also reaches a land of giants. In between these adventures, he succeeds in returning to his homeland.

'Gulliver's Travels', have four sections. Swift did not follow the traditional rules of writing while creating his masterpiece. Creatures, big and small, their peculiar customs and extraordinary lifestyles, make the book a charming classic.



Magistrate

Henry Fielding, the writer of majestic prose, was a magistrate by profession. His professional experience influenced Amelia, his last novel.

Why is 'The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling', considered as Fielding's masterpiece?

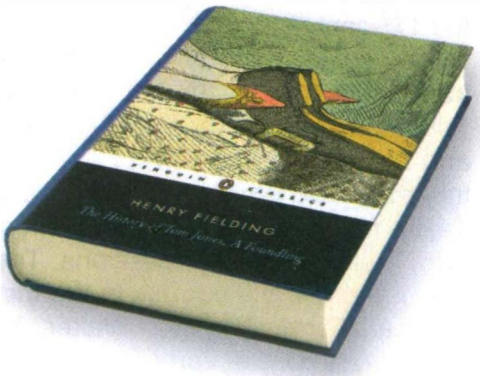
Henry Fielding authored 'The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling'. With this book, Fielding made history.

It is regarded as one of the first novels in the English language. This comic novel was first published on 28th February, 1749, in London. There are 346,747 words in the novel, spread across 18 smaller books. It is written in the picaresque style, as it comprises of many episodes. Henry Fielding dedicated the book to George Lyttleton.

Tom Jones is a novel that focuses on the psychological growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood. This style of writing is often known as bildungsroman.

The good nature of Tom Jones is contrasted with the hypocrisy of his half-brother Blifil. Tom Jones has his faults, but they are rectified by his love for Sophia Western.

The reader gains an understanding of English society at the time. 'Tom Jones', came to be regarded as Fielding's finest work.



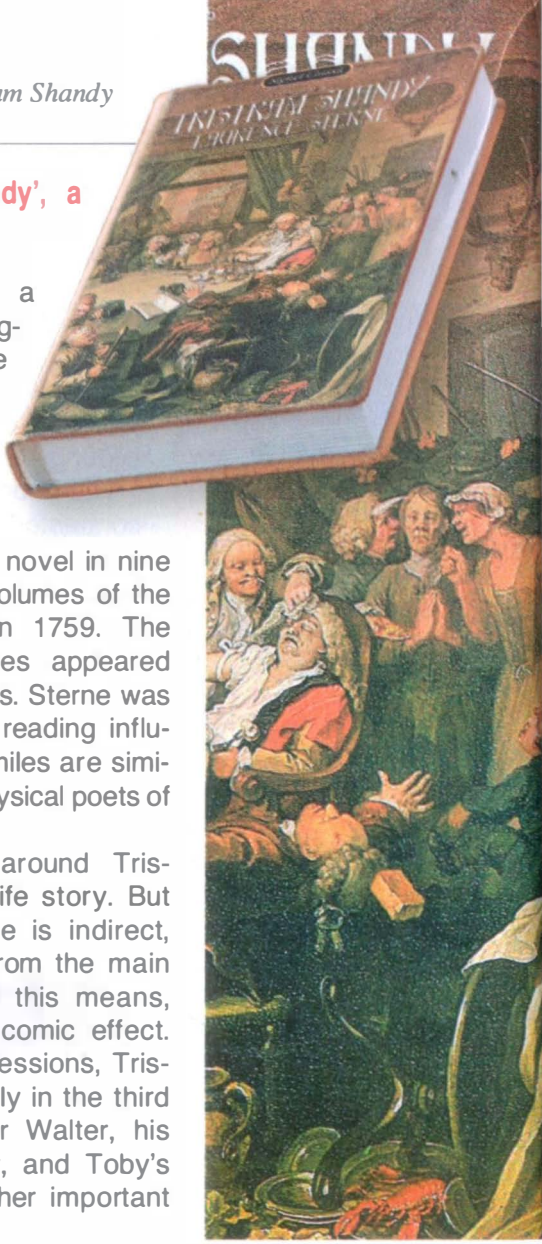
The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling

Why is 'Tristram Shandy', a unique novel?

'Tristram Shandy', is a comic classic of the English language. The full title of the novel is 'The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman', and it was written by Laurence Sterne.

'Tristram Shandy', is a novel in nine volumes. The first two volumes of the novel were published in 1759. The remaining seven volumes appeared over the next seven years. Sterne was an avid reader, and his reading influenced his writing. His similes are similar to those of the metaphysical poets of the 17th century.

The novel revolves around Tristram's narration of his life story. But Tristram's narrative style is indirect, and he often deviates from the main thread of the story. By this means, Tristram achieve great comic effect. As a result of these digressions, Tristram's birth is related only in the third volume. Tistram's father Walter, his mother, his Uncle Toby, and Toby's servant Trim are the other important characters of the novel.



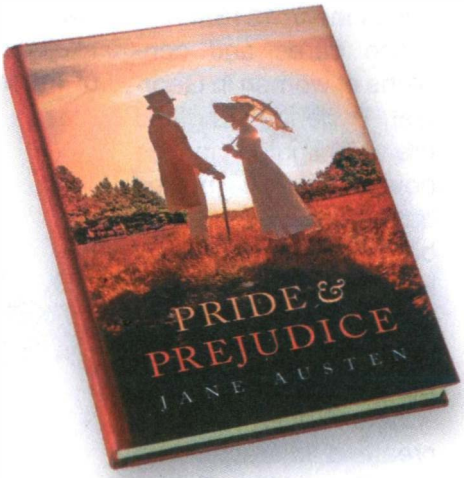
Why has 'Pride and Prejudice', become one of the widely read books?

Jane Austen penned 'Pride and Prejudice'. First published in 1813, this novel is a comedy of manners. Jane Austen focuses on upbringing, morality and marriage among the landed gentry of the British Regency.

Elizabeth Bennet, the second youngest of the five daughters of Mr and Mrs Bennett, is the heroine. The family lives in Longbourn. The eligible bachelor, Bingley, and Darcy who is status-conscious, become neighbours of the Bennett family.

Bingley likes Jane the eldest daughter. On the other hand, Darcy struggles to fit in, and does not get along well with Elizabeth Bennet.

The theme of the novel has not lost its relevance; Pride and Prejudice continues to have a place in the list of 'most loved books'. More than twenty million copies of Pride and Prejudice have been sold.



Pride and Prejudice

Novelist Anonymous

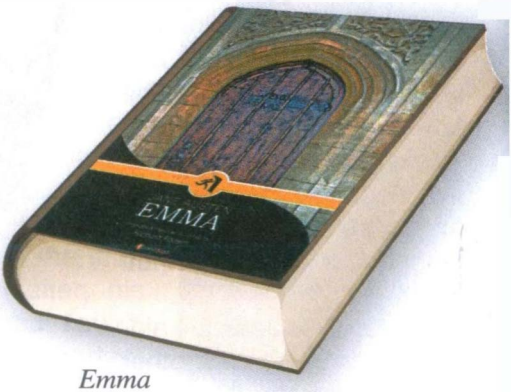
Jane Austen withheld her name from all her works during her lifetime. The first edition of 'Sense and Sensibility', was credited 'By a lady'. Her following book was 'Pride and Prejudice,' and this work was credited to 'The Author of Sense and Sensibility'.

Why is 'Emma', by Jane Austen regarded as a classic?

'Emma', is an eventful novel by Jane Austen. The novel was published in 1815.

The cares and concerns of women in Georgian-Regency England are highlighted in the novel. Several movies based on 'Emma', have been made. 'Emma', has also been adapted into numerous television programmes, and a number of stage plays.

Jane Austen aimed to create a character she alone would like. Emma was the end result. 'Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich', goes the first line in the novel. Stubborn, self-satisfied and spoiled, Emma has an exaggerated idea of her matchmaking abilities. She meddles in the lives of others. Emma has a poor understanding of situations. Like 'Pride and Prejudice', 'Emma', is also a comedy of manners. The pride of the young



Emma

heroine and the dangers of misunderstood romance make Emma an extraordinary classic.

What makes 'Frankenstein,' different from other novels?

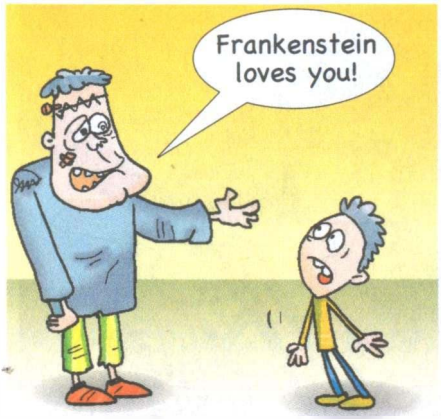
'Frankenstein', or 'The modern Prometheus', is an awesome novel about a fearsome monster.

'Frankenstein', is one of the earliest science fiction novels. Mary Shelley began writing 'Frankenstein,' at the age of eighteen.

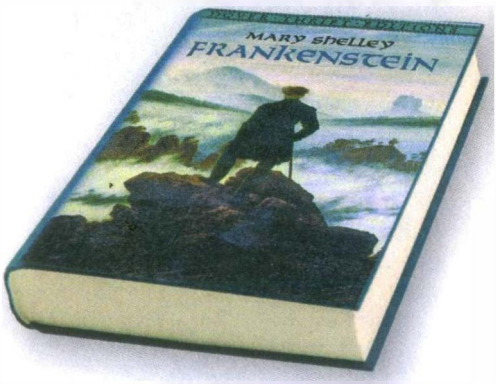
'Frankenstein', was published anonymously in 1818. Mary Shelley was twenty at the time. However the second edition, published in France, carried her name.

Victor Frankenstein came into being as the result of a strange scientific experiment. Frankenstein is referred to as 'creature', 'monster', and 'demon', in the novel.

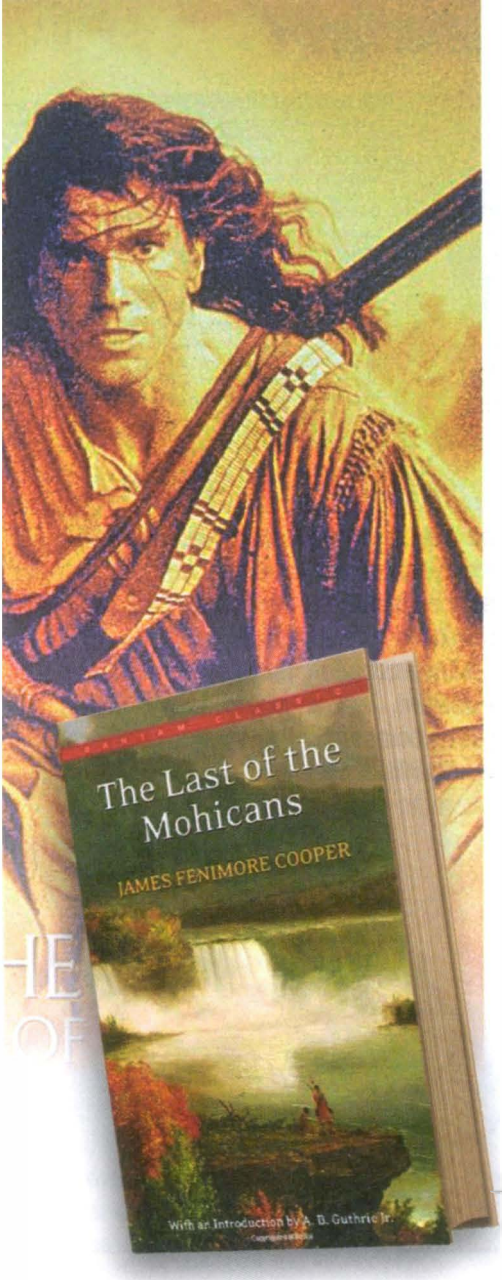
When 'Frankenstein' realizes how he came to be created and is rejected by mankind, he seeks revenge on his creator's family to avenge his own sorrow.



Mary Shelley first wrote 'Frankenstein', as a short story. This great classic still thrills readers world wide.



Frankenstein



Why does 'The Last of the Mohicans', enjoy a unique place in American literature?

'The Last of the Mohicans', was written by the first true American novelist, James Fenimore Cooper.

'The Last of the Mohicans', was published in 1826. The novel quickly became a best-seller.

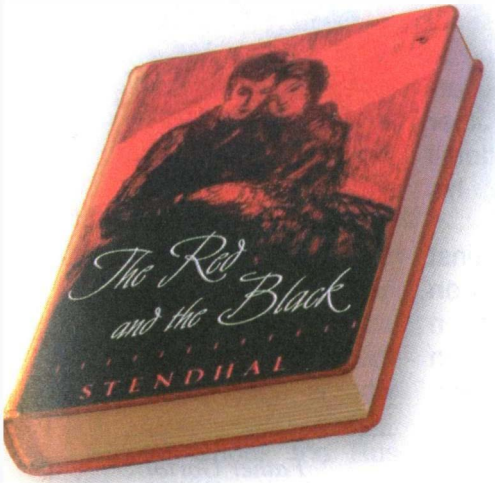
'The Last of the Mohicans', is set in 1757, during the French and Indian War, when France and Britain battled for control of North America.

Usually writers of the time showed American Indians as savages. Cooper, on the other hand, wrote of their dignity. The destruction of forests by the colonists is highlighted in his work. Along with his four other novels, 'The Last of the Mohicans', changed the popular outlook about American Indians, and the frontier period in American history.

The Last of the Mohicans

Novel without 'e'

A novel published without the letter 'e' became a novelty. Gadsby, the work of Ernest Vincent is the novel in question. The novel has 50,000 words but not a single 'e'!



The Red and the Black

Why is 'The Red and the Black', considered as a classic?

'The Red and the Black', is a two-volume novel penned by Stendhal. The novel had a two-fold purpose. It is a psychological portrait of Julien Sorel, as well as a sociological satire of the French social order. Julien Sorel is a social climber from a modest background.

By a combination of talent, effort, trickery, and hypocrisy, he manages to climb the social ladder. But he allows his passion to undo his efforts.

The Bourbon Restoration forms the background of the novel. The complete name of the novel is Le Rouge et le Noir: Chronique du XIX^{e} siecle. This may be translated as Red and Black, Scarlet and Black or as The Red and the Black.

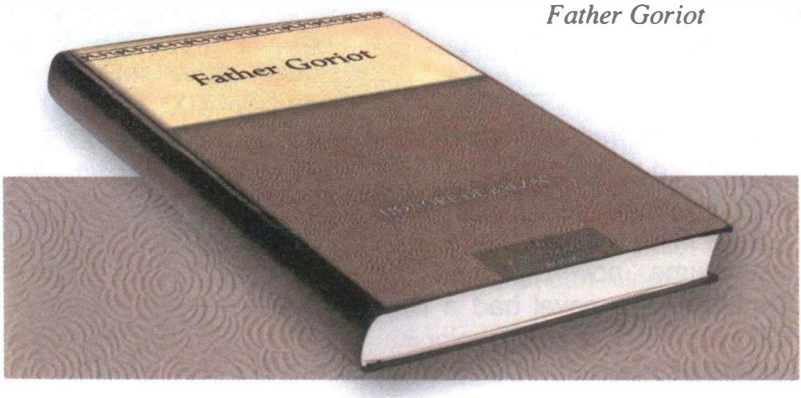
The colours in the title of this classic refer to the clerical and the secular motivations of the hero.

What is the significance of the novel, 'Father Goriot' in world literature?

'Father Goriot', won fame and honour for the French novelist, Honore de Balzac. Also known as 'Le Pere Goriot', or 'Old Goriot', 'Father Goriot', is Balzac's finest novel.

The novel first came out in serial form in 1834 and 1835. Balzac was unique in that he used characters which appeared in other books. He used a wealth of detail to build his characters. So, his characters were realistic.

The novel is set in 1819 against the backdrop of the Bourbon Restoration. The Restoration brought radical changes in French society. The characters direct their efforts towards achieving a higher social status. This is the principal theme of the novel. Goriot who is aged and doting,

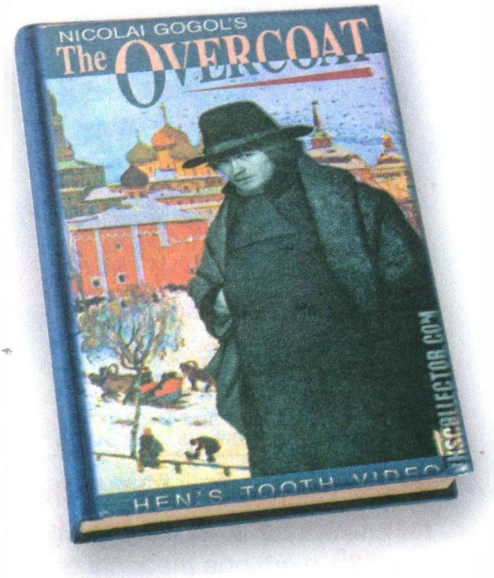


Father Goriot

Vautrin, a secretive criminal who hides from the law, and Eugene de Rastignac, an innocent law student, are the three main characters in the novel.

Rastignac, who is from the provinces, is awed by the city of Paris. The city also has some effect on the other two.

The institutions of family and marriage are scrutinised from the view point of the characters, and found wanting. The novel was immensely popular, and gave rise to numerous stage and film versions.



The Overcoat

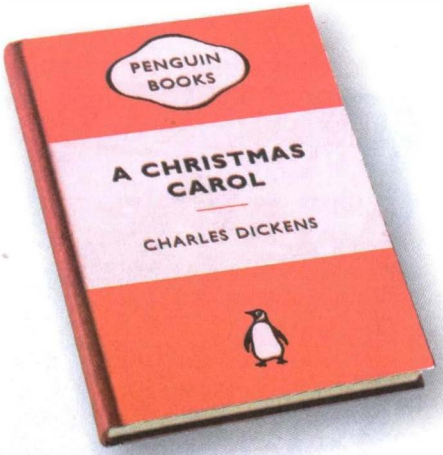
Why is 'The Overcoat', a landmark in literature?

Nikolai Gogol, the Russian genius, wrote 'The Overcoat'. The story gave rise to many different stage and film versions.

'The Overcoat', was adapted on the radio series Theatre Royal on October 11th, 1953.

The life and death of Akaky Akakievich Bashmachkin are related in the story. Though a titular councillor, Bashmachkin is a poor government clerk and copyist in St Petersburg, the Russian capital. He is humble, and so are his garments. So, he is regarded as a pushover. His cloak becomes so threadbare, that it cannot protect him from the biting cold.

Bashmachkin puts all his energies into saving money for a new cloak. 'The Overcoat', has exercised a huge influence on Russian literature.



A Christmas Carol

Why is Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol', one of the best loved novels?

Charles Dickens was a literary star, and 'A Christmas Carol', became one of his celebrated works.

'A Christmas Carol', was published in 1843. Never has the novella remained out of print. The novella has been turned into films, plays, and operas.

Ebenezer Scrooge, a bitter miser, is the main character. His expression, 'Bah Humbug' has endured, and the word 'Scrooge', has become another word for miser. The old miser is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the ghosts of Christmases Past, Present, and yet to come. These experiences transform Ebenezer Scrooge from a mean miser into a warm hearted human being.

The book is a wonderful celebration of the spirit of Christmas.

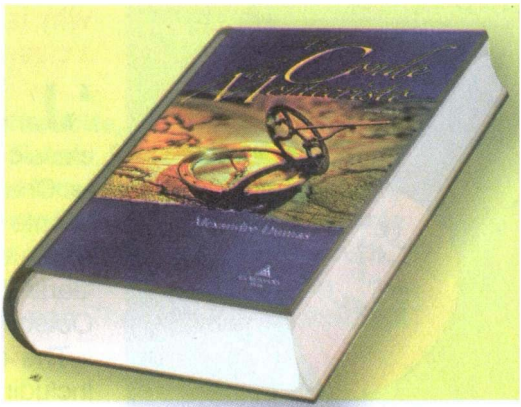
A Writer Reads

Charles Dickens became the first well known author to give public readings from his writings. His first reading was from 'A Christmas Carol'. Dickens read out from his novella before a gathering of 2000 people in the English town of Birmingham.

Why is 'The Count of Monte Cristo', regarded as a remarkable work?

Alexandre Dumas authored 'The Count of Monte Cristo'. The great French writer completed this work in 1844. He also wrote 'The Three Musketeers', and the two novels became favourites with readers.

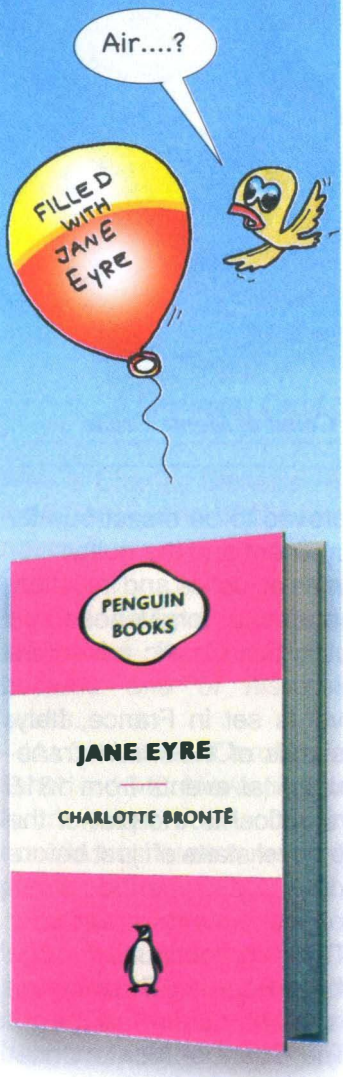
Justice is denied to the hero of the novel. He is thrown into jail on the basis of false charges. He jumps jail, makes a fortune, and avenges those guilty of imprisoning him. However, his revenge proves to be disastrous for both the innocent and the guilty.



The Count of Monte Cristo

The themes of justice and injustice, and revenge and forgiveness are played out in this classic adventure novel.

The novel is set in France, Italy, and the islands of the Mediterranean. The historical events from 1815 to1839 are critical to the plot of the novel. The novel starts off just before the Hundred Days period when Napoleon came back to power after his exile. The story continues through the era of the Bourbon Restoration, and the rule of Louis-Philippe of France. 'The Count of Monte Christo', continues to excite readers round the globe.



Jane Eyre

Why is 'Jane Eyre', considered as a classic loved by all?

'Jane Eyre', is an evergreen classic penned by Charlotte Bronte. Charlotte was one of the famous Bronte Sisters. She used the pen name of Currer Bell in the novel. 'Jane Eyre', was published on 16th October, 1847.

The experiences of the heroine including her growth and attainment of adulthood are told in the novel. Her experiences in life, emotions and her love for Mr. Rochester are important facets of the novel. The development of her moral and spiritual sensibility is also portrayed in the novel.

Charlotte Bronte was the 'first historian of the private consciousness'. She focused on the workings of the mind. So, she is regarded as the forerunner of writers such as Joyce and Proust, who were also writers of the private consciousness. Social criticism, and a well developed sense of morality, are the features of 'Jane Eyre.'

This novel is remarkable for the strikingly individual character of Jane and for the look it takes at religion, classism, and the first forms of feminism.

Bronte Sisters

Emily, Charlotte, and Anne are the three Bronte Sisters. Raised in tragic circumstances, on the Yorkshire moors, the Bronte Sisters made writing the sole purpose of their life. They penned such classics as 'Jane Eyre,' 'Wuthering Heights', and 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall'.

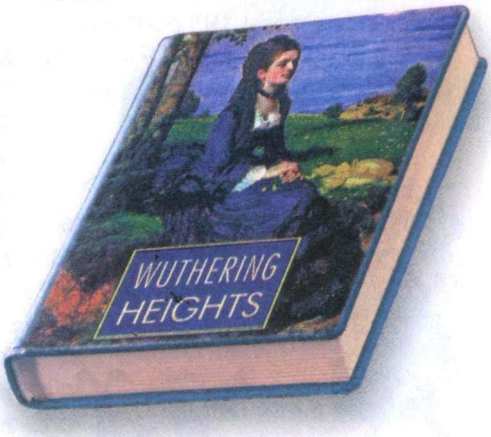
Why is Emily Bronte's 'Wuthering Heights', considered to be a classic?

Emily Bronte wrote only one novel in her lifetime, but it proved to be one of the greatest novels in the English language. That novel was 'Wuthering Heights'.

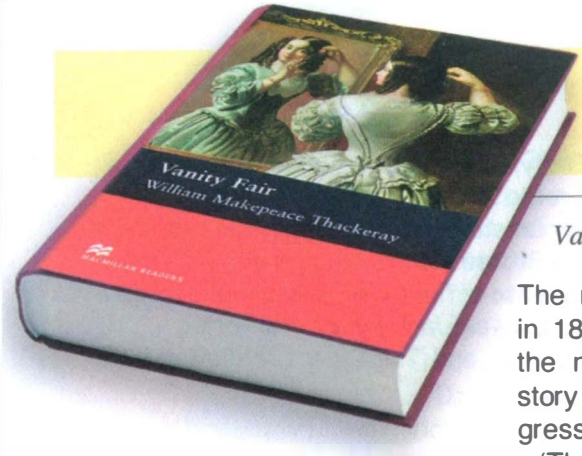
Emily Bronte was raised on the wild Yorkshire moors of England.

Heathcliff and Catherine are the primary characters in 'Wuthering Heights'. Heathcliff and Catherine love each other but they hide their love out of petty selfishness. Catherine goes to the extent of marrying another man to destroy Heathcliff emotionally. Two narrators tell the story of love, and revenge in this unforgettable classic.

The book has inspired adaptations, including film, and television dramatisations.



Wuthering Heights



What is the significance of the novel 'Vanity Fair'?

'Vanity Fair', is the major work of William Makepeace Thackeray. The novel is a social satire; it takes a humorous look at the English society in the early 19th century.

Interestingly, 'Vanity Fair', is known as a novel without a hero.

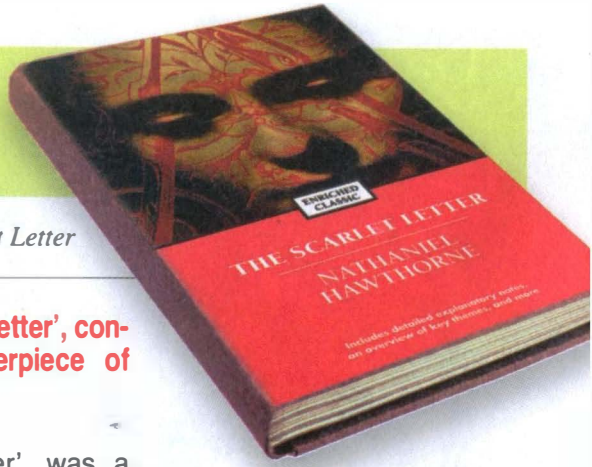
Vanity Fair

The novel was published in 1847-48. The name of the novel comes from a story in 'The Pilgrim's Progress'.

'The Pilgrim's Progress', was published in 1678, but it remained popular in Thackeray's time. 'Vanity Fair', refers to a never ending fair in the town called Vanity, a stopping place along the pilgrim's route.

'Vanity Fair', signifies Man's sinful attachment to the things of the world. The novel was ranked 122nd in BBC's Big Read poll of U.K's best loved books. Several films based on 'Vanity Fair', have been made.

Rebecca Sharp and Amelia Sedley are the main characters of this classic. Their friends and family members also feature in 'Vanity Fair'.



The Scarlet Letter

Why is 'The Scarlet Letter', considered as a masterpiece of American literature?

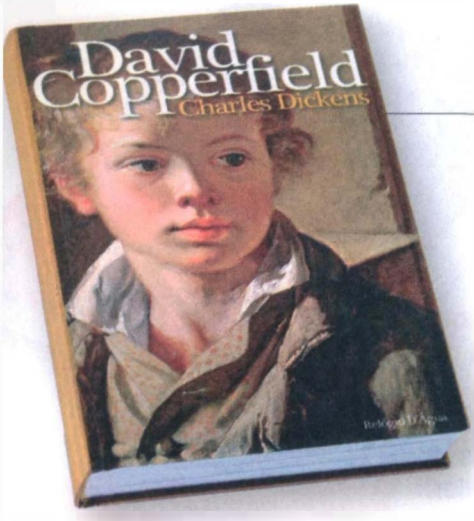
'The Scarlet Letter', was a money spinner and a bestseller. This classic is the greatest work of Nathaniel Hawthorne, the American novelist. The novel came out in 1850. Ticknor and Fields was the publisher, and it ranks among the first books to be mass-produced in America.

The events in the novel occur in Boston of the 17th century. Boston was conventional in its values, and any violation of the moral code invited punishment.

The protagonist Hester Prynne conceives a daughter through an affair. Prynne's act has a horrible effect on the lives of three people. She struggles to come back, and lead a life of honour. Humanity's never ending war with pride, and sin is pictured in the novel.

Highest Library

At the Tomorrow Square in Shanghai, stands the JW Marriott Hotel. And on the sixtieth floor of the JW Ma ed the world's highest library. The library stands 230.9 metres above the street level.



Why was 'David Copperfield', considered as the reflection of nineteenth century England?

'David Copperfield,' is noted for its colourful characters, and lively social commentary.

As in his other novels, Dickens reveals to the reader, the problems faced by the poor. Child labour, education of the poor children, punishment given by law and the class structure of mid- nineteenth century England are dealt with in the novel.

This was the eighth novel by Dickens. It came out in serial form in 1849-50 and became a book in 1850. The protagonist David Copperfield is an orphan. He must cling to the hope that he may find love and happiness, in the midst of depression, and tragedy.

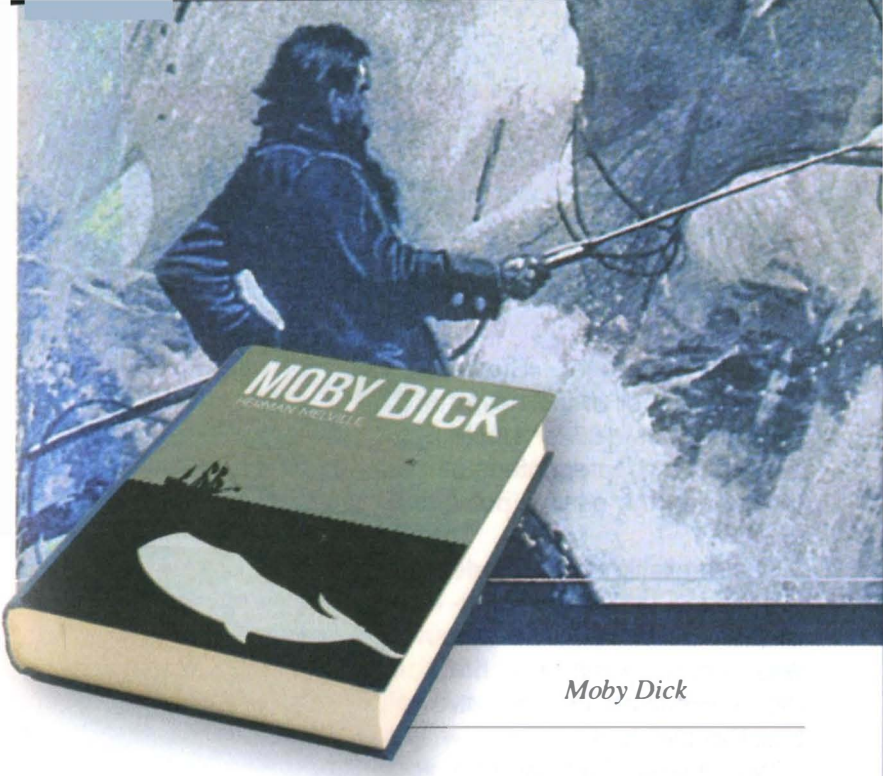
Victorian England is realistically portrayed in 'David Copperfield.' The life and times of Charles Dickens is reflected in this novel.

Why is 'Moby Dick,' considered as Herman Melville's greatest work?

'Moby Dick,' is Herman Melville's masterpiece. 'Moby Dick,' is the tale of man versus whale.

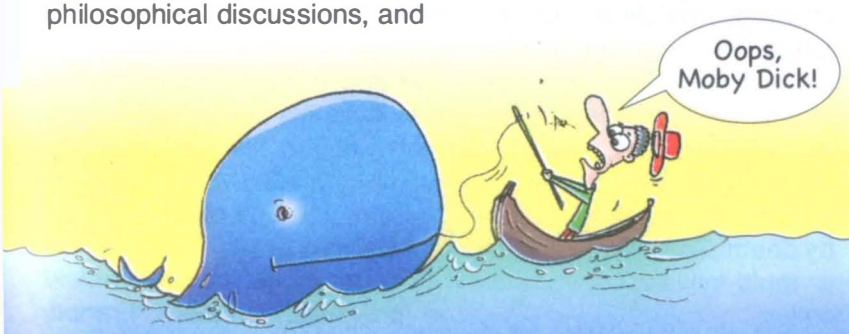
Captain Ahab is hell-bent on killing Moby Dick, the great white whale; his enemy for many years. Captain Ahab does not let his life, or the life of his crew, stand in the way of achieving his life's ambition.

He captains Pequod, a nineteenth century whaling ship, in hot pursuit of Moby Dick. This last voyage of Pequod is filled with peril and excitement. Only Ish-



Moby Dick

mael survives the adventure, and the tale is told by him. This historical description of whaling is rich in hidden meanings, philosophical discussions, and literary symbolism. Herman Melville, the American author, was inspired to write 'Moby Dick,' by his own life at sea.



Why is 'Uncle Tom's cabin,' considered as the spark that lit the American civil war?

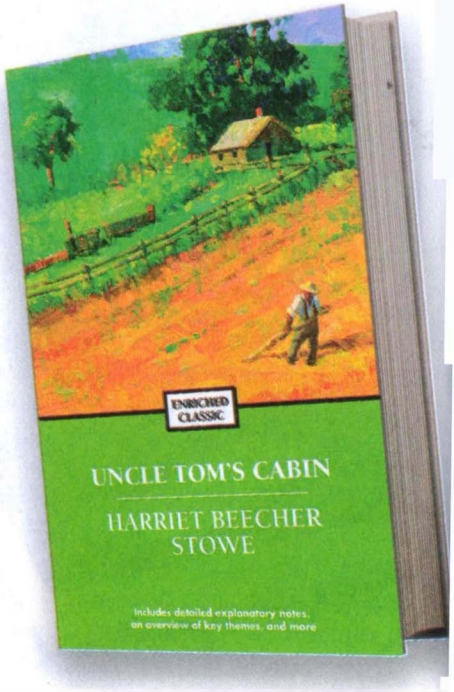
'Uncle Tom's cabin,' is an unusual novel that changed the course of American history.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was the author of the novel. Published in 1852, 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' presented to the reader, the slave's point of view.

The realistic novel made Americans realise the inhumanity of slavery. In this way, the novel made a critical contribution to the outbreak of civil war.

Two slaves, Tom and four year old Harry, are sold to pay off a family debt of their owner. The story revolves around Tom, his wife, three children, and Eliza. Harry's father Tom is a deeply religious man. Eliza and her family flee to freedom by running away to Canada.

However, Uncle Tom is released from slavery only by death. The novel became a multi-million copy best-seller.


ENRICHED CLASSIC
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
Includes detailed explanatory notes, an overview of key themes, and more

Uncle Tom's Cabin

What makes 'Madame Bovary,' an incredible literary work?

Gustave Flaubert's first novel was also his best novel. As a matter of fact, his 'Madam Bovary,' is a defining work of literary realism, and one of the greatest novels of all time.

The events in the novel unfold in provincial Northern France.

Word Perfect

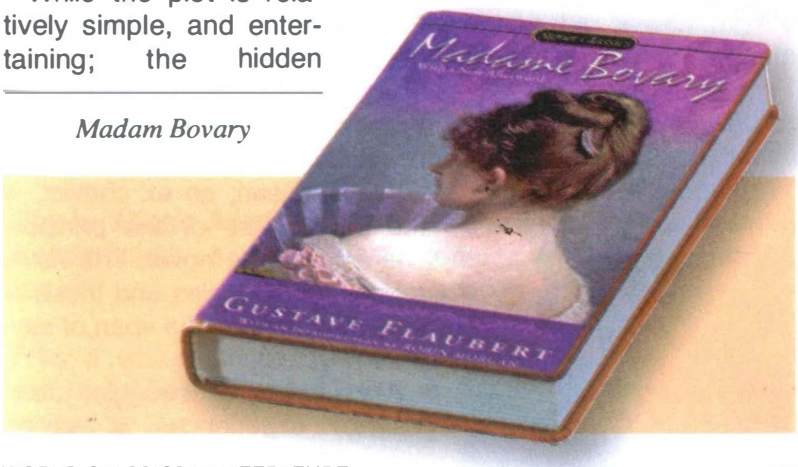
Gustave Flaubert was a writer who searched for perfection. There were times when he spent weeks on a single page. This French realist influenced generations of writers.

Emma Bovary is the novel's protagonist who is also referred to as Madame Bovary. She has a highly romanticised view of the world and craves beauty and wealth. It is the disparity between these romantic ideals and the realities of her country life that drive most of the novel.

While the plot is relatively simple, and entertaining; the hidden patterns make the novel great. In more than one way Madam Bovary was inspired by a school friend of Gustave Flaubert, who became a doctor.

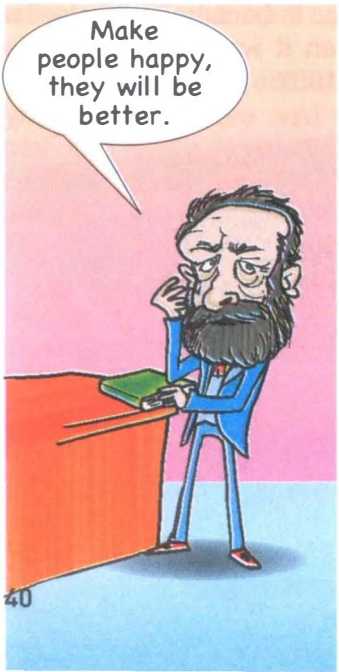
Initially, the novel appeared in serial form in the magazine, 'La Revue de Paris,' between 1st October 1856 and 15th December 1856. However, it became a bestseller only when it was published as a book in 1857.

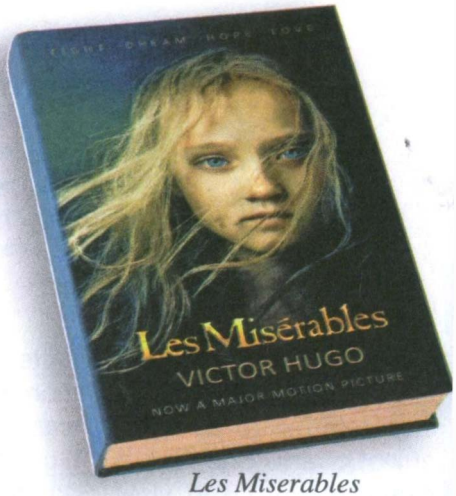
Madam Bovary



Word Train

The longest sentence in French literature can be found in 'Les Miserables,' according to critics. The sentence has 823 words.





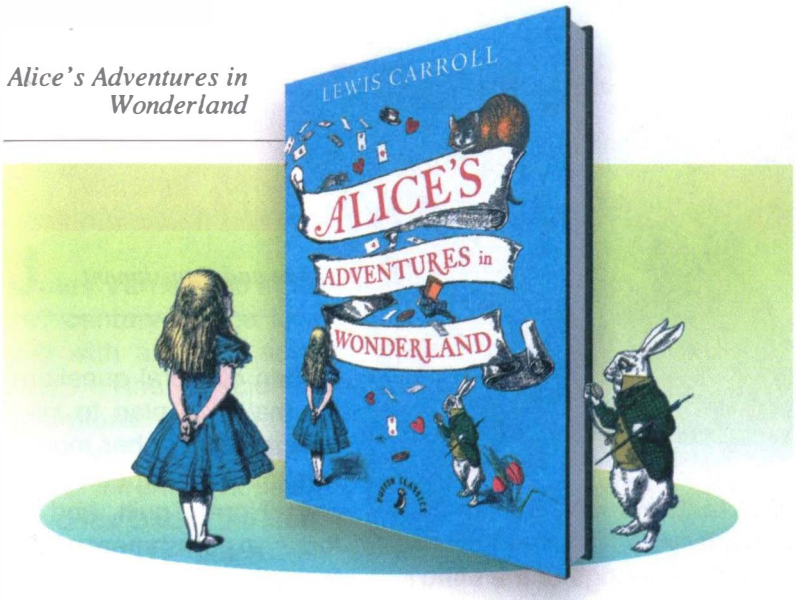
Les Miserables

Why did Victor Hugo's 'Les Miserables,' create waves?

'Les Miserables,' is an extraordinary classic about the ordinary poor. Victor Hugo, who is widely regarded as the greatest of the French writers, is the author of this novel. It was published in 1862. The political turmoil of 19th century France forms the backdrop of this novel.

Jean Valjean, an ex convict, is the protagonist, or the principal character of the novel. The novel relates his struggles and those of several others over a span of seventeen years.

After years of struggle, Jean Valjean experiences a saving



grace. Moral questions, the history of France, and the architecture of Paris, form part of the novel. Hugo tells the tale of the wretched poor who are forced by unemployment and starvation, to commit crimes.

The novel championed the cause of the poor, and they in turn, hero worshipped Victor Hugo.

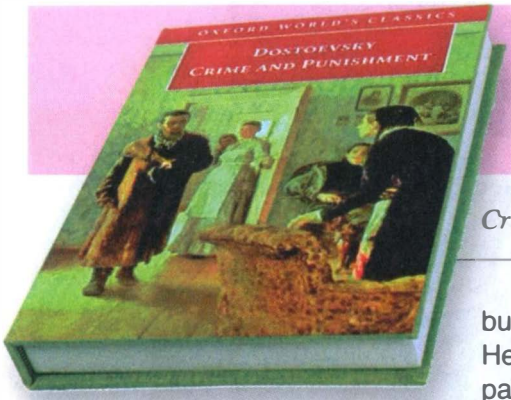
Why is 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,' a well-loved book?

As a writer, Lewis Carroll was a 'children's specialist'. Written by Lewis Carroll more than 150 years ago, 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,' has delighted many generations of children.

The white rabbit, the queen of hearts, the mock turtle, and the mad hatter, are among the unforgettable characters in this children's classic.

Alice cannot make head or tail of her adventures which get 'curiouser and curiouser'.

'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,' has social comment, as well as history and politics which makes it a favourite with adults as well. The novel is a charming parody, and a satire too.



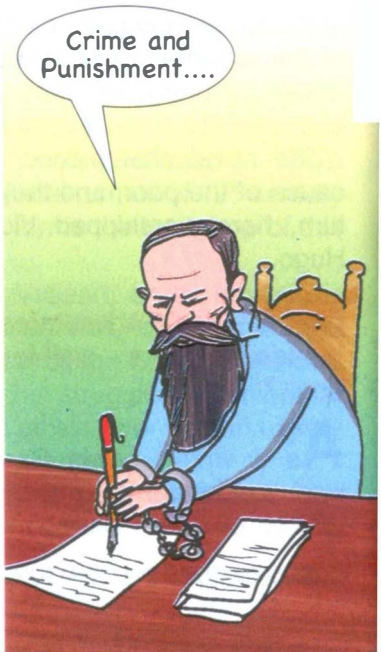
Crime and Punishment

Why is 'Crime and Punishment,' considered as a novel that dealt with the workings of the mind?

'Crime and Punishment,' is a great classic of world literature. Dostoyevsky himself was punished, and he wrote the novel after his return from ten years of exile in Siberia.

'Crime and Punishment,' is his second full-length novel. It was published in a dozen installments during 1866, in 'The Russian Messenger,' a literary journal. Critics regard the novel as the first great work penned during his 'mature' period.

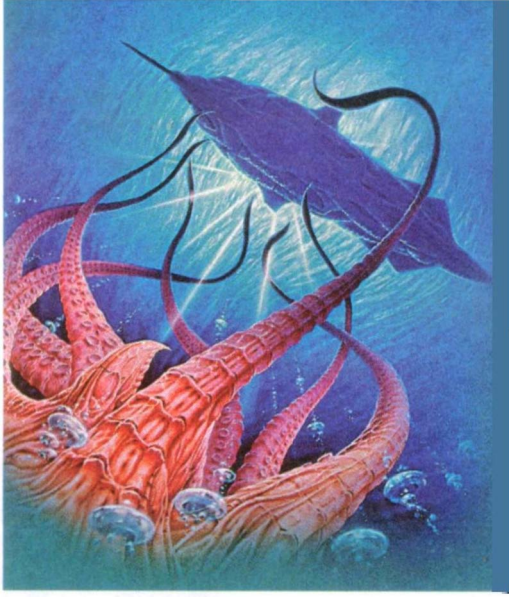
Rodion Raskolnikov is a poverty-stricken ex-student from Saint Petersburg. He is plagued by great mental pain, and suffers the burden of moral questions. He makes a plan to kill a pawnbroker for her money. Raskolnikov carries out the plan. Horror, guilt, and the focus on punishment makes this crime novel without a mystery a fascinating read.



Why is it said that Jules Verne predicted many scientific advances in 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea'?

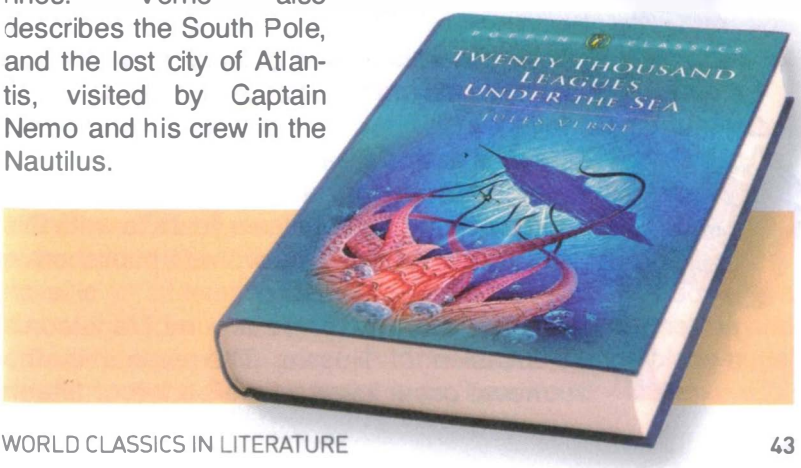
Jules Verne lived in the 19th century but he foretold with amazing accuracy, the scientific inventions of the 20th century. For instance his work, 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea,' features an electrically operated submarine named Nautilus.

Captain Nemo and his crew lead a life of adventure in the Nautilus. Nautilus is startlingly similar to some modern submarines. Verne also describes the South Pole, and the lost city of Atlantis, visited by Captain Nemo and his crew in the Nautilus.



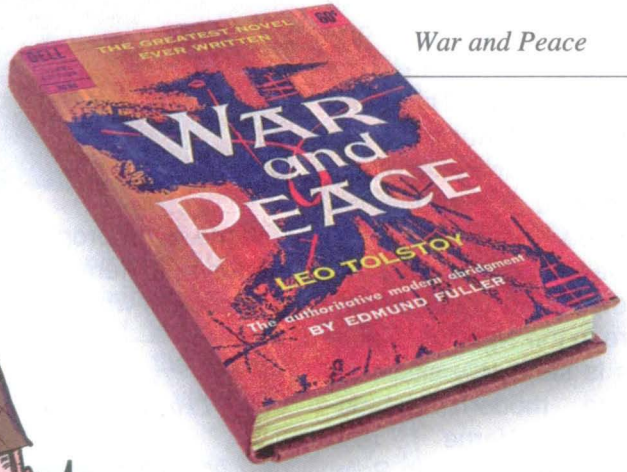
Verne even prophesied environmental problems such as the extinction of whales.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea

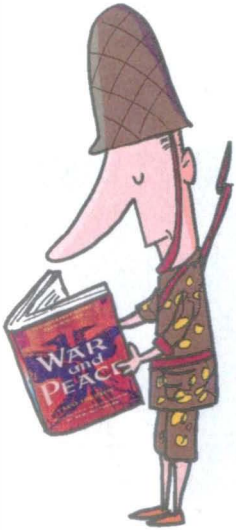


Writer or Fighter

Leo Tolstoy, the writer, was also a fighter. He saw action in the Crimean War from November 1854 to August 1855. Tolstoy wrote 'Boyhood,' the second book in his trilogy of autobiographies, during this period.



War and Peace



Why is Tolstoy's 'War and Peace,' considered as a monumental achievement?

'War and Peace,' is a Tolstoy tale that won him honour and glory. Tolstoy spent the greater part of seven years to write this novel. 'War and Peace,' was published in 1869.

The story revolves around Napoleon's invasion of Russia. The events in the novel occur over a time period of fifteen

years. Tolstoy drew characters from different backgrounds. Army men, civilians, nobility, peasants and the rest of the characters are wonderfully lifelike.

Tolstoy's literary style is unique. The realism of the characters, Tolstoy's mastery over psychology, and the historical context of war make 'War and Peace,' a monumental novel.

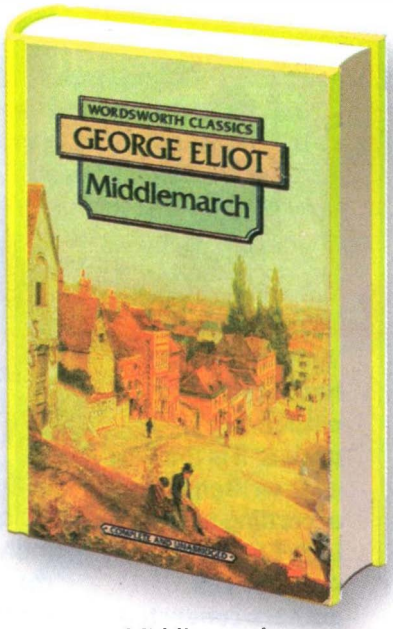
Why is 'Middlemarch,' by George Eliot regarded as a classic?

Mary Ann wished to disguise the fact that her books were written by a female. So, she used the pen name, George Eliot.

'Middlemarch,' is regarded as her masterpiece. It is also one of the great English novels. Middlemarch is the imaginary midlands town in the novel.

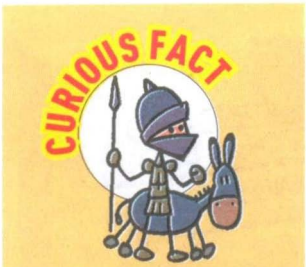
The events in the novel take place from 1829 to 1832. The novel is an interesting blend of fact and fiction.

Reality enters the novel in the form of the Reform Act of 1832, the start of the railways, the passing away of King George IV, and the succession of his brother, the Duke of Clarence.



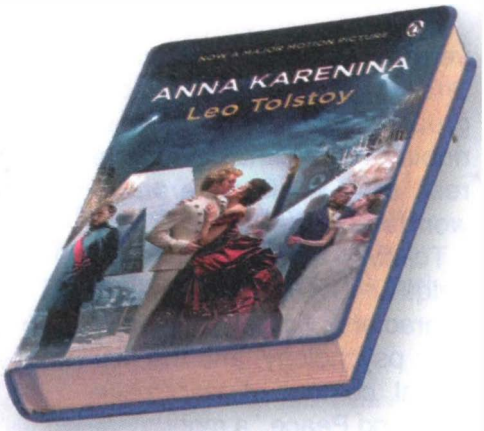
Middlemarch

The novel has a number of characters. The position of women in society, the nature of marriage, idealism, self-interest, religion, hypocrisy, political reform, and education are the major themes in the novel. Some parts of the novel are humorous.



Anna Karenina

'Anna Karenina,' has received an outpouring of praise. It is the best ever written novel, according to William Faulkner. A poll of 125 authors conducted by the 'Time,' magazine in 2007 found that Anna Karenina was the 'greatest novel ever written'.



Anna Karenina

include the Russian feudal system of Tolstoy's time, politics in families, individuals, and the Russian government, moral values, religion, social class, and gender.

With 'Anna Karenina,' Tolstoy achieved perfection in creating realist fiction. Tolstoy considered 'War and Peace,' to be more than a novel and 'Anna Karenina,' to be his first true novel.

Why is 'Anna Karenina,' considered as a flawless work of art?

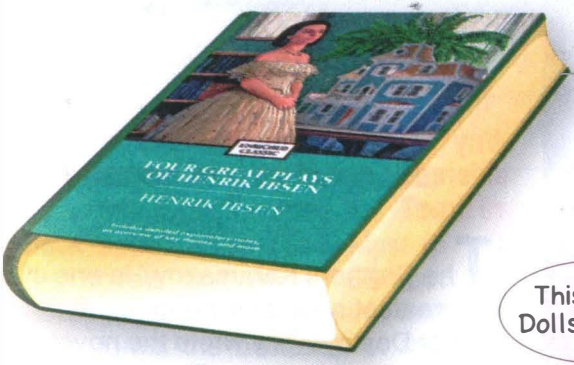
'Anna Karenina,' is a one thousand page long classic. A wide range of issues are explored in the novel. The topics

Why is Ibsen's 'A Doll's House,' considered as one of its kind?

'A Doll's House,' is a literary masterpiece. This three act drama was created by the great Henrik Ibsen. The first show of 'A Doll's House,' took place at the Royal Theatre in Denmark, on 21st December,1879.

Honour

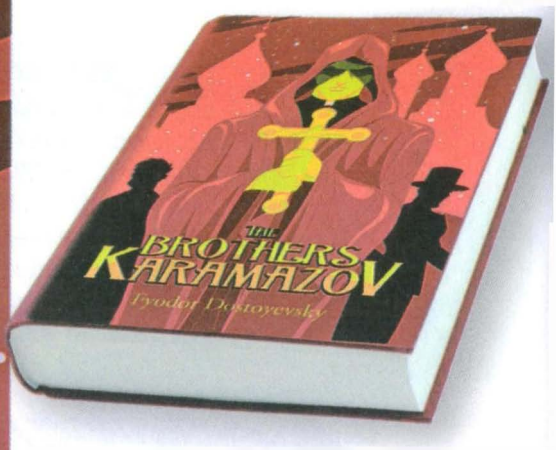
'A Doll's House,' was the world's most performed play in 2006, the centennial year of Ibsen's death. UNESCO honoured the play and the maker of the play when it inscribed Ibsen's autographed manuscripts of 'A Doll's House,' on the Memory of the World Register in 2001.



A Doll's House

The play was sharply critical of the written and unwritten rules of marriage in the nineteenth century. The play created a huge controversy. At the end of the play, Nora leaves her husband and children in order to discover herself.

The character of Nora was inspired by Laura Kieler, a close friend of Ibsen. All the major characters in the play too were based on real people.



The Brothers Karamazov

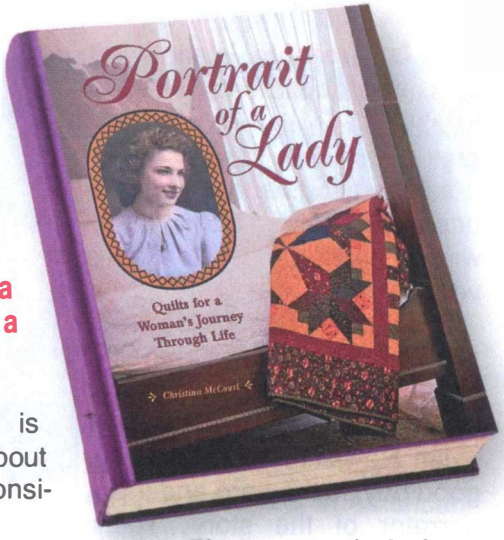
Why is 'The Brothers Karamazov,' considered as one of the greatest novels of all time?

'The Brothers Karamazov,' is one of the greatest novels of world literature. Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote the novel in the nineteenth century. The plot of the novel revolves round the murder of a man.

Four of his sons have motives to commit the murder. Dmitry, Ivan, Alyosha and Smerdyakov make up the foursome. Dmitry is a sensualist, Ivan, an intellectual, Alyosha, a mystic, and Smerdyakov is the twisted and crafty man.

A love triangle, and an exciting court room drama are part of the plot. Dostoyevsky conveys his beliefs about life,

Man and the existence of God, through this novel. This brilliant, complex and fantastic novel was Dostoyevsky's last work.



The Portrait of a Lady

Why is 'The Portrait of a Lady,' considered as a remarkable novel?

'The portrait of a lady,' is a Henry James novel about personal freedom, responsibility, and betrayal.

The novel was serialised in The Atlantic Monthly and Macmillan's Magazine in 1880-81. The book appeared in 1881. Most of his novels are set in Europe. Europe, particularly England and Italy, forms the backdrop of this story too.

Isabel Archer, the heroine of the story, is a strong willed American woman who inherits a fortune. However, she is duped by two crafty American expatriates. As in some of his other novels, Henry James explores the differences between the New World and the Old World in 'The Portrait of a Lady.' The novel is the masterpiece of Henry James's early period.

Mowgli Tales

'The Jungle Book,' is a children's classic written by Rudyard Kipling. Mowgli is the main character in 'The Jungle Book.'

Why is 'Treasure Island,' a classic of children's literature?

'Treasure Island,' is an unputdownable adventure written by Robert Louis Stevenson.

The novel was published in 1883. Children of all ages have enjoyed this exciting search for buried treasure.

Jim Hawkins, a brave and good boy, is the hero and the narrator of the story. The novel has memorable characters such as Long John Silver, the pirate captain. A betrayal on the high seas is also part of the novel.

Treasure Island

Why is 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,' considered as a trailblazer in American literature?

Readers everywhere love Huckleberry Finn. 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,' is a classic written by Mark Twain. 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,' is the sequel to 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.'

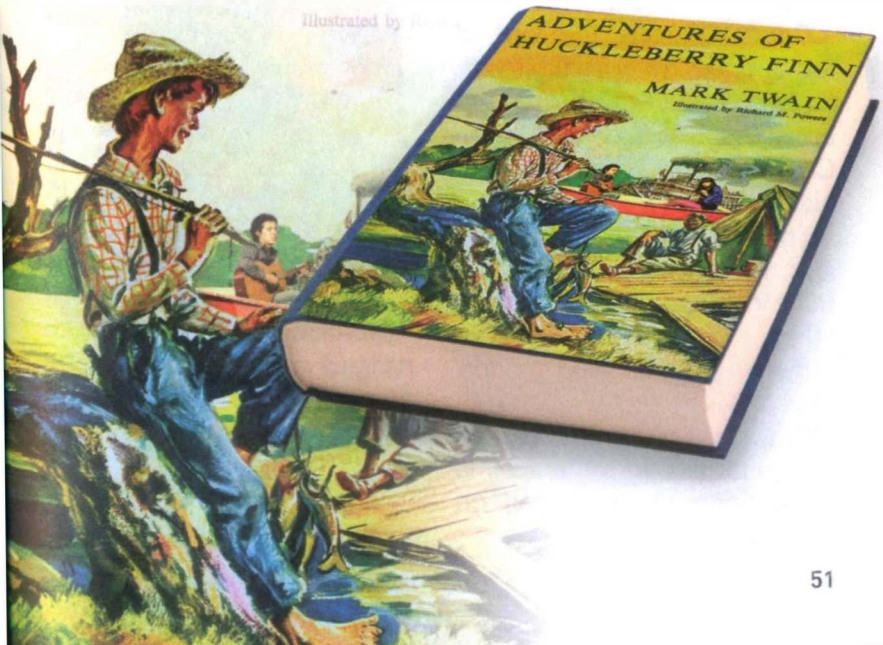
Besides striking images, the book has valuable lessons to

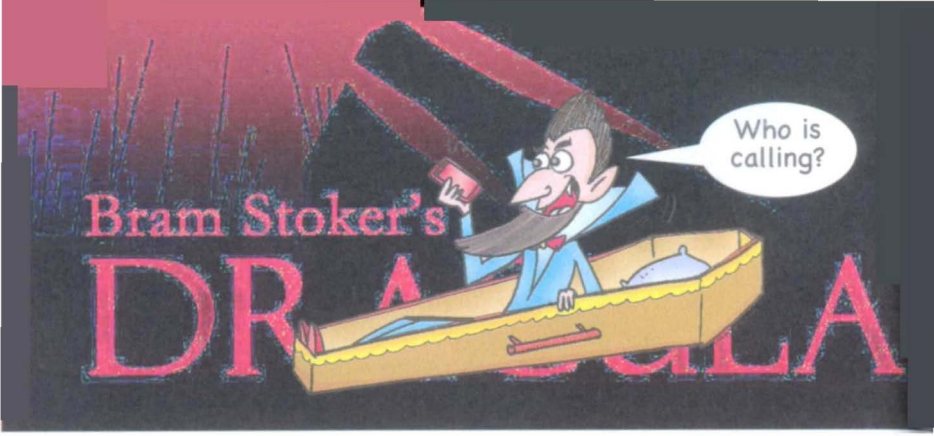
Survival by Chance

Men of a Roman army invading Asia Minor discovered a treasure of manuscripts in a pit. These were the writings of Aristotle. The army men brought the manuscripts to General Sulla, who had them recopied in Rome. The works of Aristotle had survived purely by chance.

offer. The humour and wisdom of Mark Twain comes through in this book. Mark Twain lived in the nineteenth century. 'Huck' and his friend Jim journey on the Mississippi River in a raft. Huck is running away from his stepfather, while Jim is a runaway slave. The use of American themes, and the spoken language, made the novel a trailblazer in American literature.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn





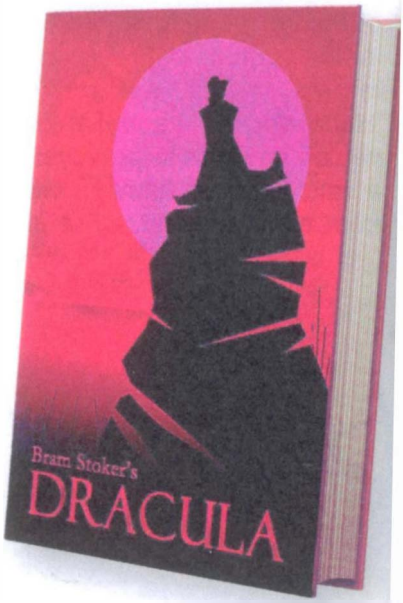
Why is Bram Stoker's 'Dracula,' one of the greatest of horror stories?

'Dracula,' is a spine chilling horror novel. Bram Stoker wrote 'Dracula.' Good and evil face off in Dracula.

Count Dracula, the lord of the undead, rises from his coffin in the dead of the night to suck the blood of the living. Count Dracula is the evil vampire.

The characters, their behaviour, morals, and lifestyle, are truly Victorian. The novel also takes a look at the struggle between tradition and modernity.

Dracula has turned into an image for horror. Several films have been made, based on this horror classic.



Dracula

Why is 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented,' regarded as a masterpiece?

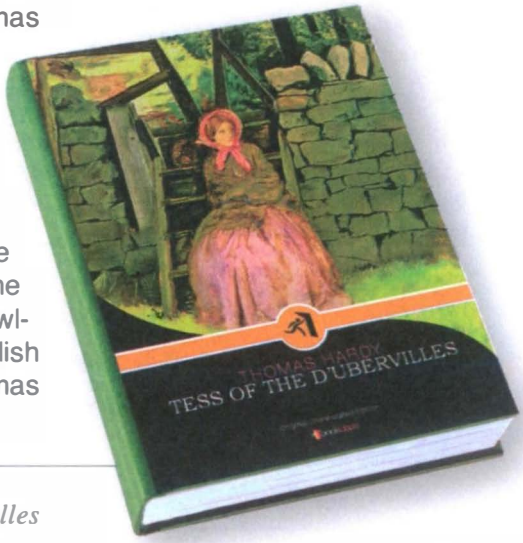
As the title indicates, 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented,' is the tale of an innocent woman.

The novel appeared in serial form in The Graphic, a British newspaper. The novel was censored for the purpose. The book was published in 1892. The long depression of the 1870s forms the backdrop of this story. The story unfolds in Wessex, the imaginary location created by Thomas Hardy for his novels.

The rural locale is hard hit by poverty. The novel is noted for its highly emotional and sentimental approach. The initial reviews of this novel were mixed. Later, 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles,' was acknowledged as a major English novel, and one of Thomas Hardy's best novels.

'St. Joan'

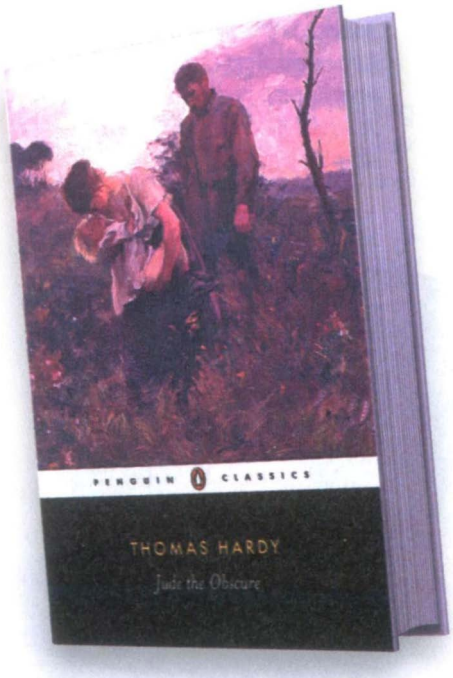
The great English dramatist, George Bernard Shaw wrote a play titled 'St Joan.' The life of Joan of Arc is depicted in this play, and it was written after Joan of Arc was made a saint.



Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Diary with a Difference

The family of Anne Frank went into hiding to escape from the Nazis. The little girl wrote her diary in hiding. The diary was published as 'The Diary of Anne Frank,' after her death. The diary is a frank account of the plight of the Jews under Nazi rule.



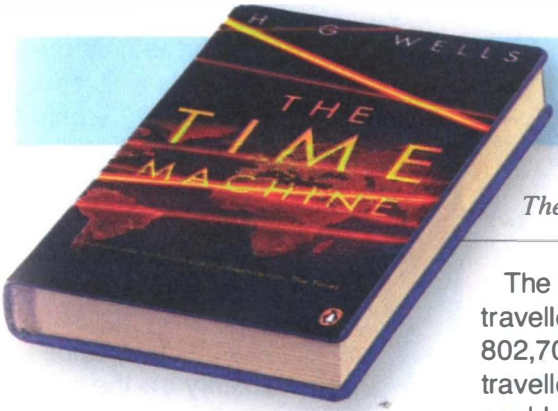
Jude the Obscure

Why is 'Jude the Obscure,' considered as a classic that deals with the problems of Victorian England?

'Jude the Obscure,' started off as a magazine serial, and ended up as a book. The novel was serialised in 1894, and published as a book in 1895.

Jude Fawley, the principal character in the story, is a stonemason who wishes to be a scholar. He is in love with his cousin, Sue Bridehead.

The novel examines issues relating to marriage, class, education, and the Church in Victorian England. 'Jude the Obscure,' is Thomas Hardy's last completed novel.



The Time Machine

Why is 'The Time Machine,' by H.G Wells the vehicle for his political and social ideas?

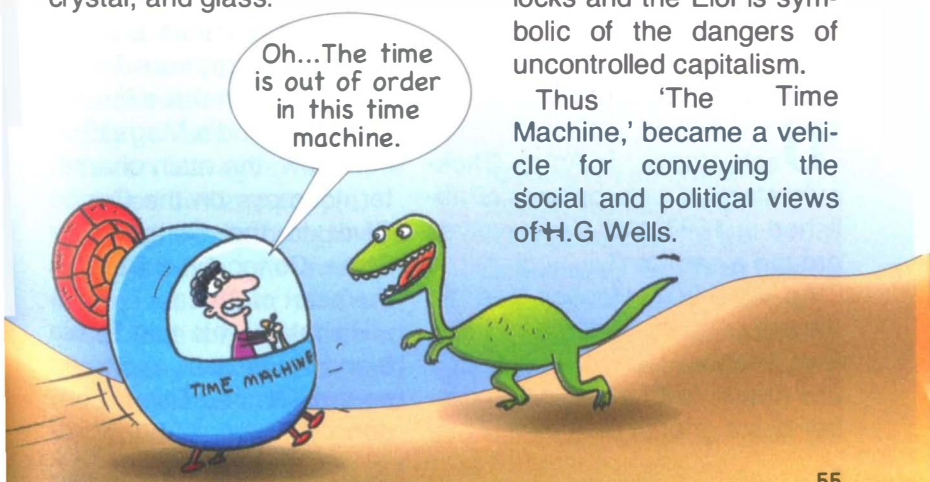
'The Time Machine,' is a timeless science fiction classic. H.G Wells was the first to write fiction of this kind. 'The Time Machine,' is a complex machine made of ivory, crystal, and glass.

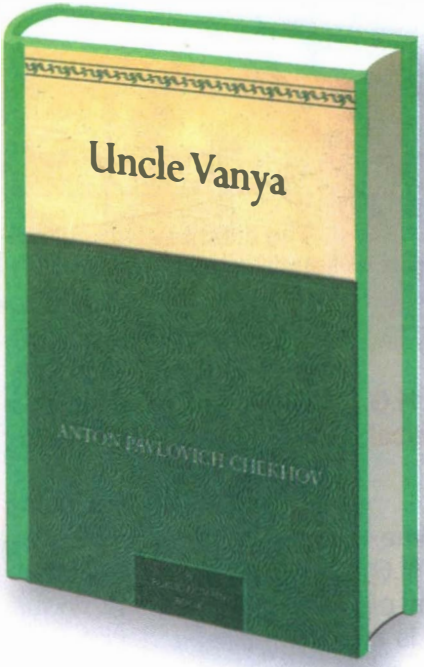
The machine catapults a traveller into the year AD 802,701. The nameless traveller lands in a strange world. Eloi and Morlocks are the two races in this world. The Eloi are helpless and useless.

The Morlocks are monkey-like, and live below the surface of this world. The Morlocks prey on the Eloi.

The world of the Morlocks and the Eloi is symbolic of the dangers of uncontrolled capitalism.

Thus 'The Time Machine,' became a vehicle for conveying the social and political views of H.G Wells.





Uncle Vanya

Why does 'Uncle Vanya,' appeal to readers even today?

'Uncle Vanya,' is Anton Chekov's story of unhappiness. Published in 1897, this play revolves around a sad family.

An elderly professor has an attractive wife named Elena. Two friends, Vanya and Astrov are drawn to Elena. Each member has a grief of their own. They make no effort to hide their sorrows. This is a Russian masterpiece of wasted lives and unsatisfied human emotions.

The greatness of Anton Chekov, lies in his ability to create lifelike characters. Such is the strength of his characters that they appear with regularity on the modern stage. They are relatable even today.

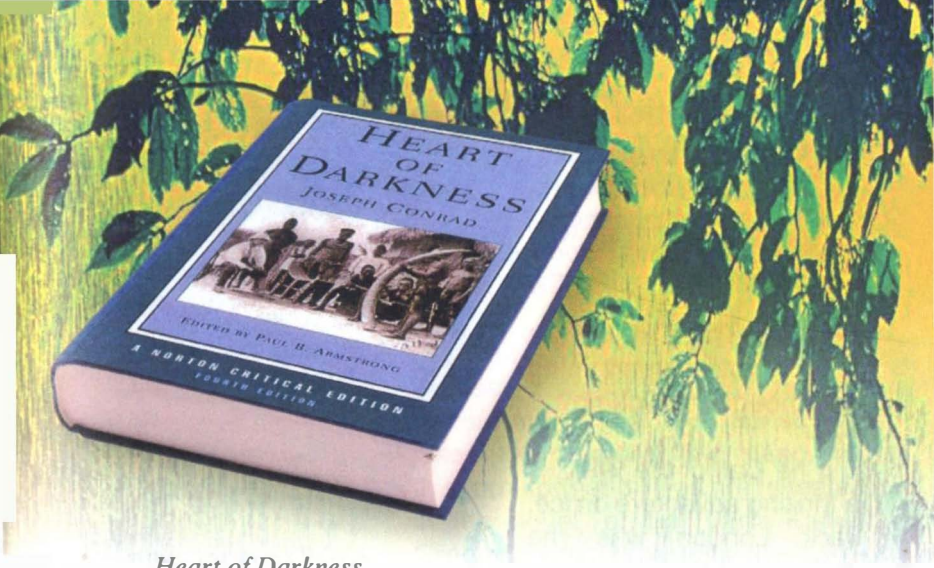
Why is 'Heart of Darkness,' considered as a great work of literature?

Joseph Conrad did not know English as a child, but he went on to write a great novella in English.

Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness,' first appeared as a serial story in three issues of Blackwood's Magazine.

Marlow, the main character, journeys on the Congo River to the Congo Free State. Congo Free State is the heart of Africa.

He relates his tale to his friends in a boat anchored on the Thames River, London.



Heart of Darkness

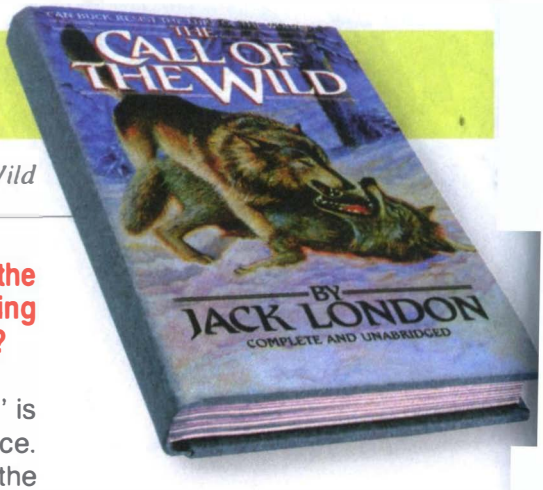
Marlowe has a fixation with Kurtz, the ivory trader. Conrad compares Africa and England in the novel, and discovers that both are territories of darkness.

The reader comes away with the idea that there is hardly any difference between savages, and the so called civilized people.

Conrad deals the ugliness of Imperialism and racism in this novel. 'Heart of Darkness,' has been translated into many languages, and read by many millions round the world.

Mother of Recipes

Apicius, is a collection of Roman cookery recipes. It is also called, 'De Re Coquinaria.' This book has details of the feasts partaken by Emperor Claudius. It is regarded as one of the first recipe books.



Why is 'The Call of the Wild,' both entertaining and thought provoking?

'The Call of the Wild,' is a thrilling adventure on ice. Jack London was the author and the novel was published in 1903.

The story is told from the point of view of Buck, the sledge dog. For Buck, it is a matter of life and death, in the biting cold of icy Alaska.

The novel also symbolises the struggle of the working class, which is at a huge disadvantage in a capitalistic society. The novel also portrays the difference between the cold beauty of the Arctic, and the ugliness of the English slums.

London had visited England just before starting on the novel. Young and old alike continue to enjoy 'The Call of the Wild.'

Chinese Cinderella

The much-loved story of Cinderella is not entirely original. It is adapted from a similar story in a Chinese book. The Chinese book dates back to 850 AD.

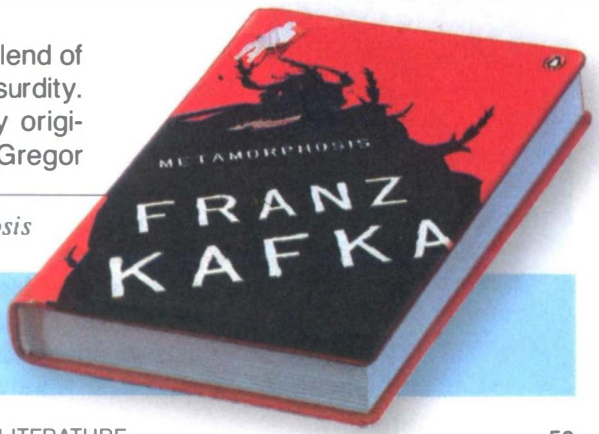
Why is the publication of 'Metamorphosis,' considered as a milestone in literary history?

Many regard 'Metamorphosis,' as the greatest novella ever, but its author died before the book was published.

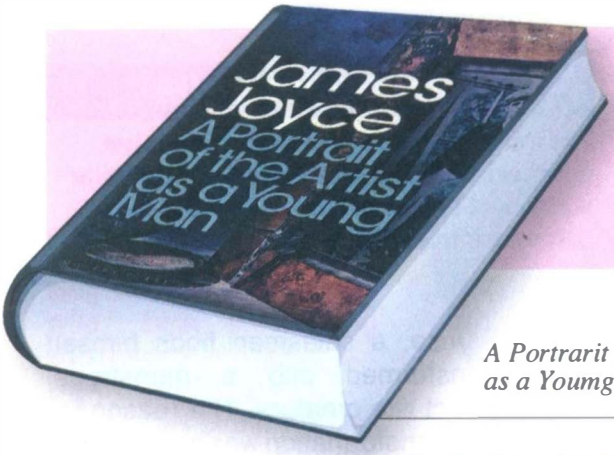
Franz Kafka was the author of 'Metamorphosis.' The book was printed and published in 1915.

The novel is a blend of horror and absurdity. The plot is highly original. On waking, Gregor Samsa, a salesman finds himself transformed into a monstrous, insect like creature. The reason for this transformation was not revealed in the novel, or by Franz Kafka. Gregor Samsa's parents are horrified and burdened by his metamorphosis, or transformation.

This German classic is studied in universities throughout Europe and America. 'Metamorphosis,' changed the way readers and writers saw fiction.



Metamorphosis



A Portrarit of the Artist as a Youmg Man

Mother

'Mother,' is the masterpiece of Maxim Gorky. Maxim Gorky is the pen name of Alexei Peshkov. 'The Lower Depths,' 'My childhood,' and 'Barbarians,' are some of his other famous novels.

Why is 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,' a trendsetter?

'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,' is in many ways, a portrait of its author, James Joyce. This was his first novel, which explains the autobiographical content.

The novel appeared in the English magazine, 'The Egoist,' in serial form, due to the efforts of Ezra Pound in 1914 and 1915. Ezra Pound was a famous American modernist poet. B. W. Huebsch of New York published the novel in book form in 1916.

Stephen Dedalus, the hero of the novel, is the fictional version of James Joyce. He questions, and attempts to go against the Catholic and Irish conventions of his native land.

This leads to his self exile from Ireland to Europe. 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,' gave James Joyce an important place in literary modernism. The novel stood third in the list of the100 best-English language novels selected by the Modern library in 1998.

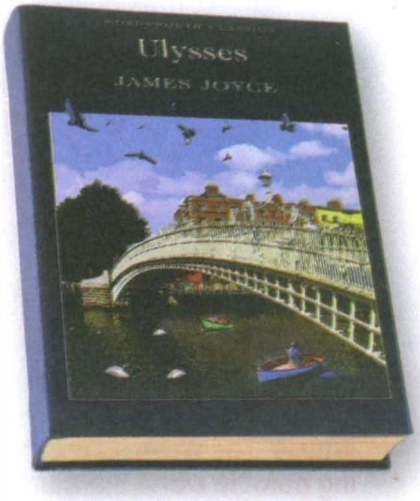
Why is 'Ulysses,' a ground breaking masterpiece?

'Ulysses,' is a literary experiment that succeeded. Authored by James Joyce, this modernist novel was published in 1922.

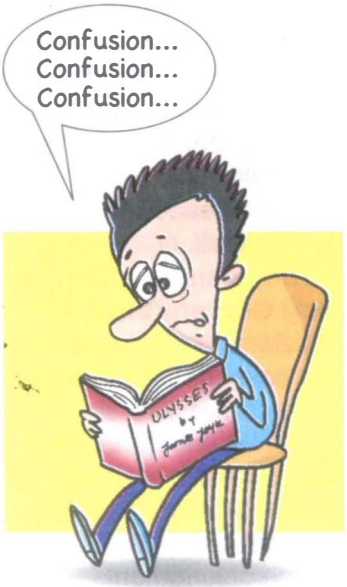
Joyce gave the go-by to punctuations, used fragmented ideas, and frank expressions in Ulysses. The novel fascinates critics and puzzles readers. Long sentences, hard to understand prose, and puns are features of the novel.

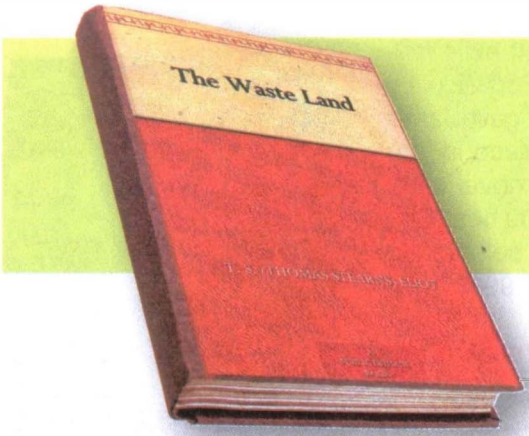
References to the Greek epic poem, 'The Odyssey,' can also be found in 'Ulysses'. 'Ulysses,' is the story of events in the life of three ordinary people that occur in a single day at Dublin.

Mythology, European history, and religion are given importance in the novel. With 'Ulysses,' James Joyce succeeded in creating a groundbreaking work.



Ulysses





The Waste Land

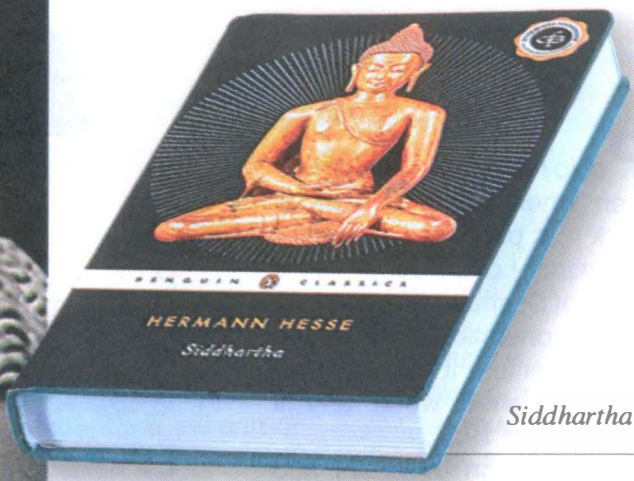
Why is 'The Waste Land,' considered as turning point in world literature?

Thomas Stearns Eliot wrote 'The Waste Land.' 'The Waste Land,' is one of the most significant poems of the twentieth century. Published in 1922, the poem has such enduring phrases as 'April is the cruellest month'.

The poem also made the Sanskrit mantra, 'Shantih, shantih, shantih,' familiar to the Western reader. 'The Waste Land,' is a poem in 434 lines.

The poem is based on the legend of the Holy Grail and the Fisher king. References to Western, Buddhist, and Hindu cultures make the poem difficult to understand.

There are five sections in the poem. The Burial of the Dead, A Game of Chess, The Fire Sermon, a section that includes a brief lyrical petition, and What the Thunder Said are the five sections. The poem ends with an image of judgment.



Siddhartha

Why did 'Siddhartha,' lead to an increased interest in Eastern religions?

'Siddhartha,' is a classic novel of spirituality and self discovery. Herman Hesse wrote the novel in German. 'Siddhartha,' was his ninth novel and it was published in 1922.

It was written in a simple, yet lyrical style. Siddhartha, the principal character, sets out in search of spiritual fulfilment, in the time of Buddha.

Siddhartha, is one of the names of the Buddha, but the novel is not a story about Buddha. The story is set in India. The novel sparked interest in Eastern religions.

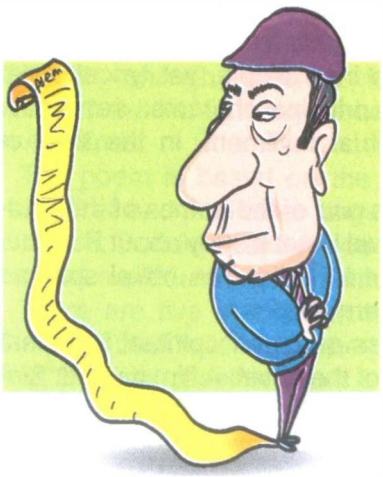
Man's timeless quest for spiritual fulfilment lies at the core of the novel. A film named 'Siddhartha,' with Shashi Kapoor playing the lead was released in 1972. Conrad Rooks was the director.

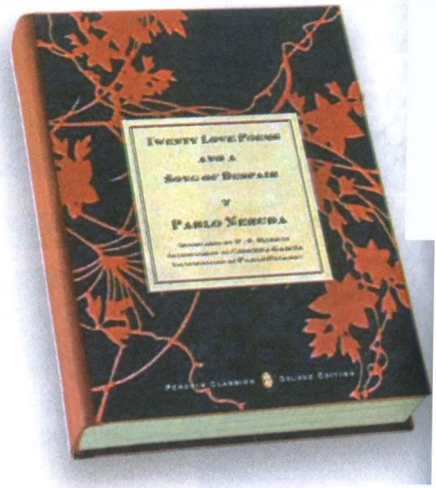
Why did 'Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair,' establish the author as a genius?

Pablo Neruda was only nineteen when his most famous work was published.

'Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair,' was a collection of romantic poems by the young genius. It was his second published work, and it came out in 1924.

The passion of youth, and the utter loneliness that grief brings, permeate the poem. Pablo Neruda drew upon his personal life and associations, to write this masterpiece.





Twenty Love Poems

Pablo Neruda had an extraordinary ability to convey human passions and emotions through poetry.

'Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair,' has been immensely popular and has been translated into many languages.

Why is 'The Great Gatsby,' popularly known as a literary classic?

F. Scott Fitzgerald, the author of 'The Great Gatsby,' regarded himself as a failure, and it was only after his death that

the greatness of his novel was recognised. The novel was published in 1925 by Scribener's. Only 20,000 copies of the novel were sold in the first year. The reviews were mixed too.

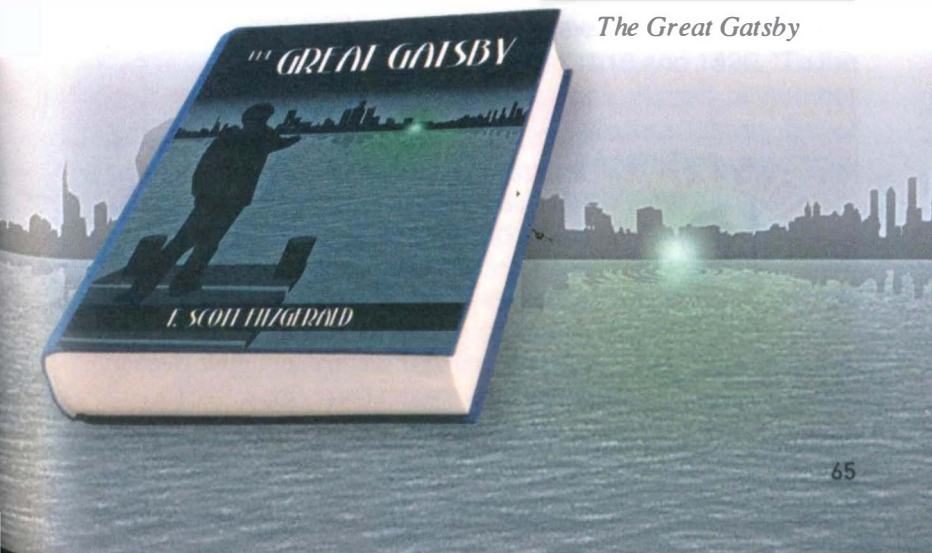
Fitzgerald passed away in 1940. After World War II, the novel became popular. 'The Great Gatsby,' was taught in American high schools. Many stage and film versions of the novel appeared. 'The Great Gatsby,' even became a front runner for the title of 'The great American novel'.

The events in the novel play out in the fictional town of West Egg in 1922. The Roaring Twenties, or the Jazz Age of America is portrayed by Fitzgerald. Social ferment, resistance to change, idealism, and decadence are dealt with in the novel. The novel sounds a warning to the believers of the 'American Dream'.

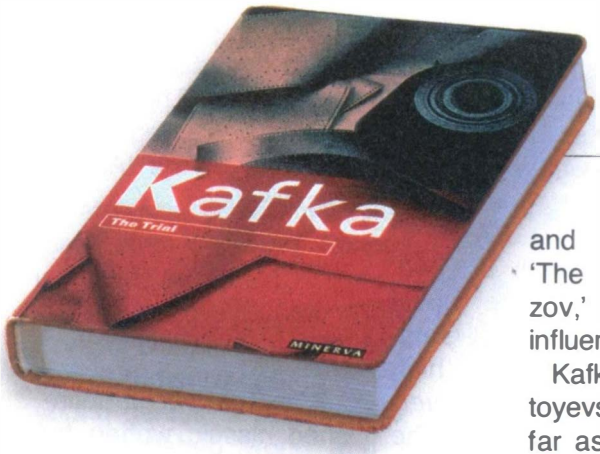
Why is 'The Trial,' by Franz Kafka a literary work of importance?

'The Trial,' is an unfinished classic written by Franz Kafka. Though Kafka was a genius, he never completed his novels. 'The Trial,' does have a chapter that brings the tale to an end.

Kafka wrote the novel from 1914 to 1915. Kafka died in 1924. His friend



The Great Gatsby



The Trial

and literary executor edited the novel, and it was published by Verlag Die Schmiede.

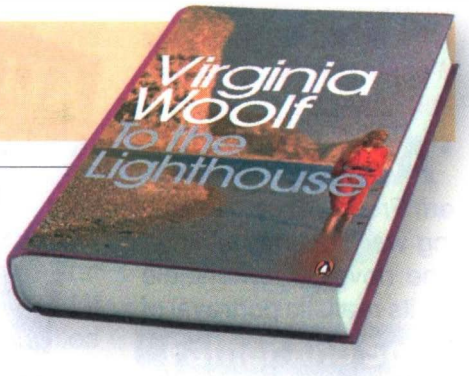
The original manuscript rests at the Museum of Modern Literature in Germany. 'The Trial,' is the story of a man who is arrested by a remote, unapproachable power.

The man does not know why he is prosecuted, or what crime he has committed. Dostoyevsky's 'Crime and Punishment,' and 'The Brothers Karamazov,' exerted a huge influence on this work.

Kafka regarded Dostoyevsky as a relative as far as writing was concerned. Willa and Edwin Muir translated 'The Trial,' into English and it was published in 1937. The book made it to the list of Le Monde's 100 best books of the century. 'The Trial,' was also ranked second among the best German novels of the last century.

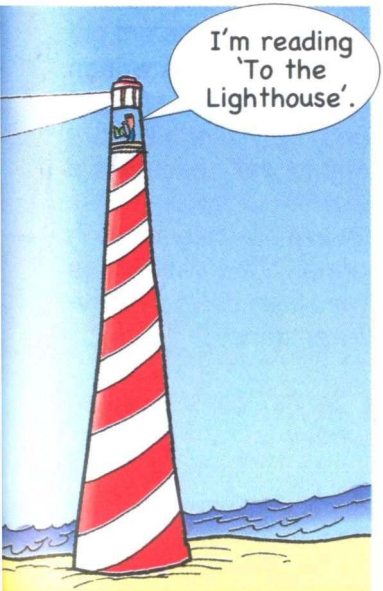
Tragic Family

Tragedy struck Kafka and his family. His was a Jewish family in Prague that spoke German. He was the eldest of six children. His two younger brothers died while they were still infants. Kafka passed away before the Second World War. His two younger sisters lost their lives in Hitler's concentration camps.



Why is 'To the Light house,' an unusual book?

'To the Lighthouse,' is startlingly different from traditional novels. Virginia Woolf, the novelist, focuses on the thoughts and observations of the characters. The plot is of lesser importance. There is little dialogue, and virtually no action. This is known as the stream of consciousness technique.



In fact, 'To the Lighthouse,' is a classic example of a stream of consciousness novel. It is a modernist novel, like the works of Marcel Proust and James Joyce.

The plot is about the Ramsays, and their trips to the Isle of Skye in Scotland between 1910 and 1920. 'To the Lighthouse,' was placed at number fifteen in the Modern Library list of the 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century.

The novel also found a place in TIME magazine's list of the one hundred best English-language novels from 1923 to 2005. 'To the Lighthouse,' is also a portrayal of childhood emotions and adult relationships.

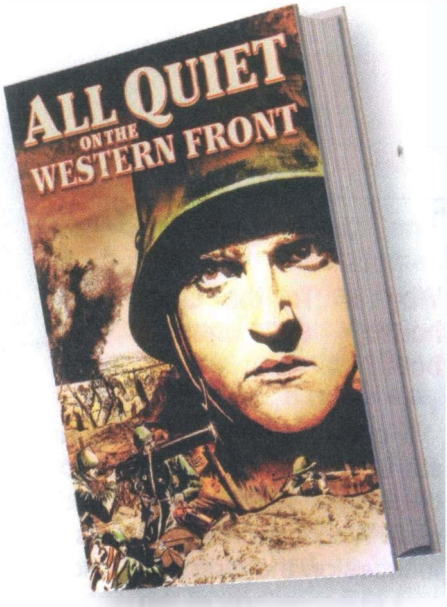
Why is 'All Quiet on the Western Front,' a remarkable classic?

'All Quiet on the Western Front,' is the bestselling war novel of all time. The novel is remarkable for its realistic portrayal of war.

Erich Maria Remarque, the author of the novel, saw action in World War I as an infantryman. He fought on the German side, and was wounded. Remarque wrote the novel 'to report on a generation that was destroyed by the war-even when it escapes shells'. The novel was published in 1929.

Paul Baumer, a German volunteer and infantryman, is the hero of the novel. He fights in the last two years of the war. World War I is portrayed from the viewpoint of Paul Baumer.

Bloody battles, intervals of peace, the comradeship of the soldiers and stays in hospitals described in the novel



All Quiet on the Western Front

are true to life. The novel is written in first person as a series of short episodes. So, the novel about a generation lost to war, reads like a diary.

The novel sold more than a million copies in Germany, the year it was published. The Nazis burnt the novel for its anti-war stance.

Why is 'The Castle,' considered as an unusual book?

Kafka wrote the first words of 'The Castle,' on the mountain resort of Spindlemuhle. He reached Spindl-

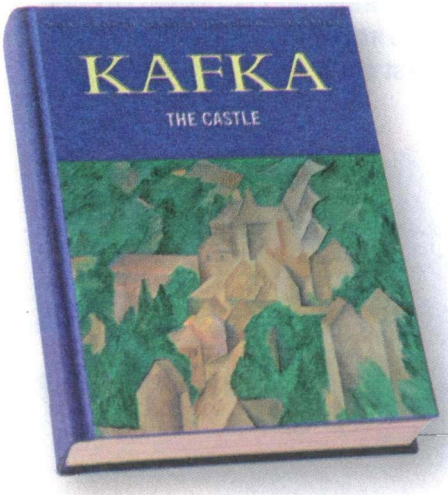
emuhle on 27th January 1922, and began writing the very same evening.

A photograph taken at the resort shows Franz Kafka on a horse drawn sleigh. The setting is similar to that in 'The Castle'. The first few chapters were written in the first person. Later on, Kafka changed it to a third person narrator identified as K.

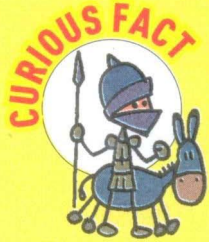
'The Castle,' was published in 1926. The plot revolves around K. He arrives in a village which is ruled by a mysterious castle. K tries to gain entry to the castle, but he fails. The novel is incomplete.

Kafka passed away before finishing the novel. However, he indicated that he meant the novel to end with K on his deathbed. K receives a notification from the castle stating that the 'legal claim to live in the village was not valid, yet, taking certain circumstances into account, he was permitted to live, and work there'.

The novel underlines the futility of chasing an unrealistic goal.

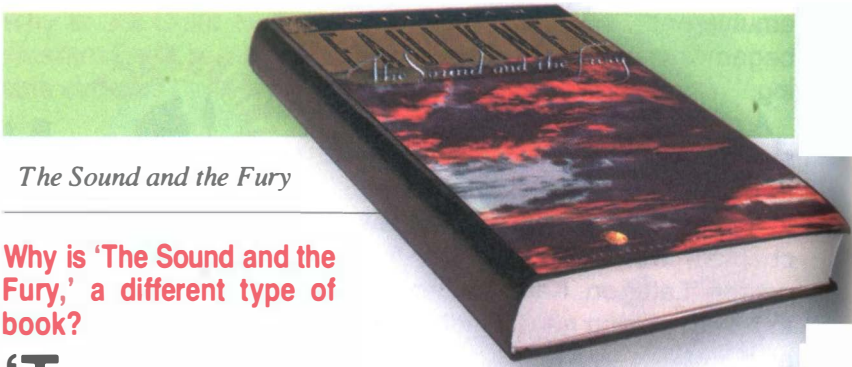


The Castle



Father and Son

Kafka had a strained and complex relationship with his father. His father was overly dominant, and discouraged Kafka's writerly leanings.



The Sound and the Fury

Why is 'The Sound and the Fury,' a different type of book?

'The Sound and the Fury,' is a famous work of William Faulkner. Set in the Mississippi, 'The Sound and the Fury,' is a tale of a decaying, aristocratic family.

The events occur after the Civil War are told in four sections. The Compson brothers Benjamin, Quentin, and Jason relate the first three sections. The fourth part is told by an all-knowing narrator. The deeply troubled characters make this novel an unforgettable one.

Faulkner did not follow the conventional form of novel writing. He gave hardly any importance to plot, or character development. His innovations made him one of the most influential writers of the last century.

Blindness

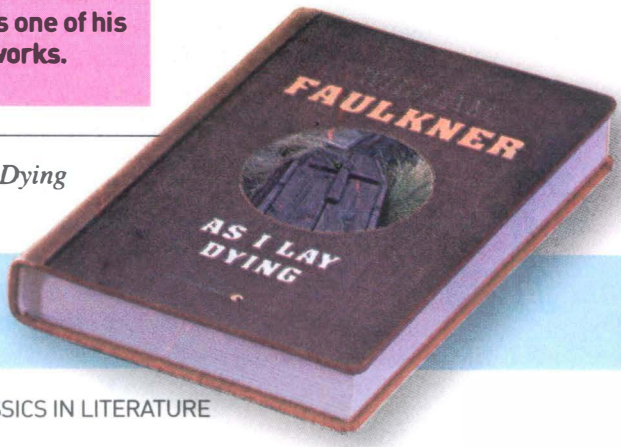
Jose Saramago is the author of 'Blindness'. In the novel, an epidemic of blindness affects virtually everyone in a nameless city. As a result, the city as a whole, fails to function. Saramago was a Portuguese author, and 'Blindness,' is one of his finest works.

Why is it said that the novel 'As I Lay Dying,' changed the history of literature?

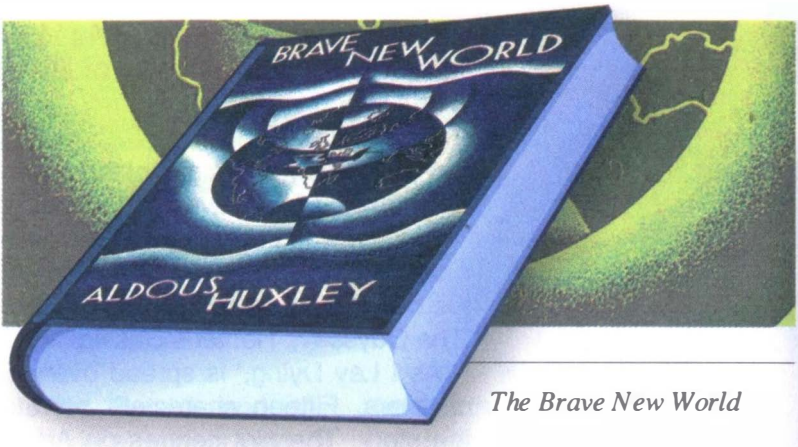
'As I Lay Dying,' is one of the greatest novels of the twentieth century. The novel was published in 1930. This novel is Faulkner's fifth. The name of the novel is adapted from Book XI of 'The Odyssey,' Homer's classic.

'As I Lay Dying,' is spread over 59 chapters. Fifteen characters narrate the story. The plot centres on Addie Bundren's wish to be buried in her hometown of Jefferson.

Jefferson is in Mississippi. Addie's poor, rustic family attempts to honour her wish. The motivations of the family are given importance. Faulkner wrote it from midnight to 4.00 am for six weeks, while working in a power plant. 'As I Lay Dying,' was described as a 'tour de force' by the author himself.



As I Lay Dying



The Brave New World

Why is 'Brave New World,' a warning against uncontrolled technological advances?

'Brave New World,' is a brilliant novel by Aldous Huxley. The novel prophecies the dangers of scientific advancements. The novel was written in the 1930s. Science was making astounding progress during the time.

Overpopulation, and psychological brain washing, are among the dangers foreseen by Huxley.

The plot involves the reproduction of humans in laborato-

Absalom

The title of the novel 'Absalom, Absalom,' alludes to the biblical story of Absalom. Absalom, the son of King David of Israel rebels against his royal father. David asks his general Joab to deal gently with Absalom. Instead, Joab kills Absalom. David is grief stricken by the tragedy.

ries. These humans are produced to perform a specified role. Misfits are cast out. The government gets complete control of each individual by the use of mind altering drugs.

Huxley forewarns that science should be used for the goodness of mankind, else mankind would perish.

What is the significance of the novel 'Absalom, Absalom'?

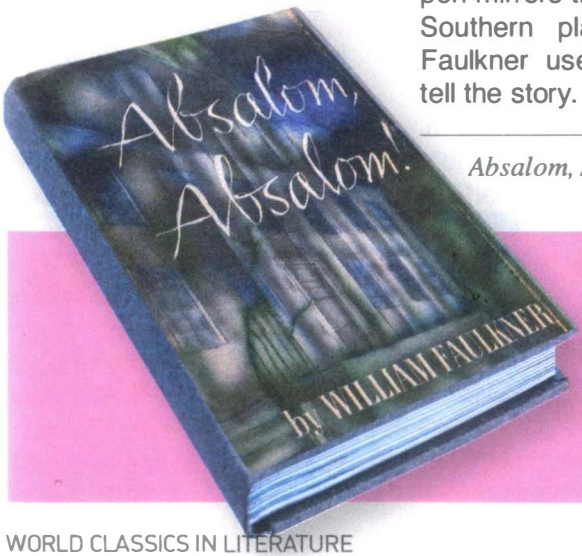
'Absalom, Absalom', along with 'The Sound and the Fury', helped Faulkner win the Nobel Prize in Literature.

'Absalom, Absalom,' was published in 1936. This is a pre-civil war story of three families set in the American South. It focuses on the life of Thomas Sutpen.

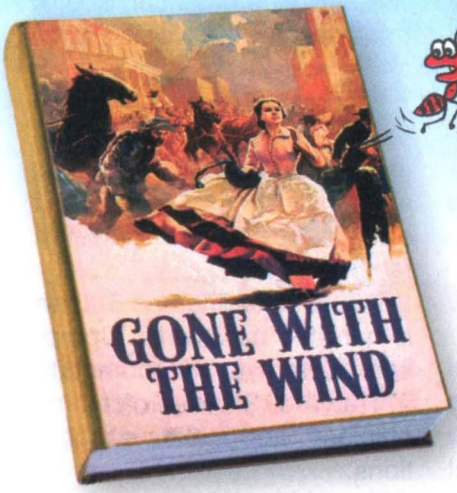
Thomas Sutpen, a white man who was born poor moves to Virginia to achieve his twin aims. He wants wealth, and also desires to be a powerful family patriarch.

The story of Thomas Sutpen is narrated by Quentin Compson to Shreve, his roommate at Harvard. Shreve voices his opinions, and makes suggestions.

The history of Thomas Sutpen mirrors the rise and fall of Southern plantation culture. Faulkner uses flashbacks to tell the story.



Absalom, Absalom



Gone with the Wind

Why is 'Gone with the Wind,' a valuable literary work?

'Gone with the Wind,' is a remarkable re-creation of a bygone era. Set in Georgia during the Civil War and after, 'Gone with the Wind,' is a celebrated historical romance.

The novel was published in 1936, and became an instant bestseller. Margaret Mitchell, the author, identified the primary theme as

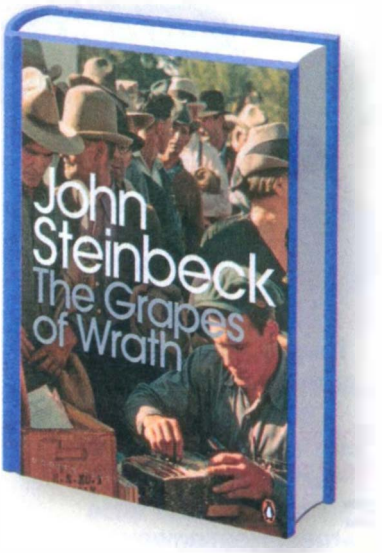
From Josh to Mark

Mark Twain is the pen name or pseudonym of Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Before deciding on Mark Twain as his pen name, he used the pseudonym of Josh.

survival. She won praise and the 1937 Pulitzer Prize. The novel serves as a historical record of life in the 19th century South America. Memories about the glorious past of the South in the 20th century are also depicted in the novel.

Gender, class, and love are given importance in the novel. Scarlet O'Hara the proud heroine, and Rhett Butler, her dashing love interest became part of literary history.

Ashley and Melanie Wilkes are other important characters in the novel. 'Gone with the Wind,' was made into a great film.



The Grapes of Wrath

Why did 'The Grapes of Wrath,' create an uproar?

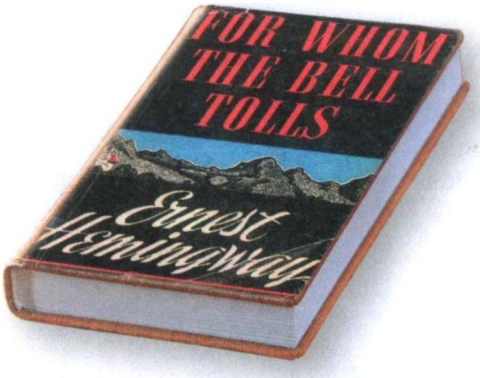
'The Grapes of Wrath,' is a novel written by John Steinbeck, and published in 1939. John Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1962.

'The Grapes of Wrath,' is a great novel about the Great Depression. The Great Depression occurred in the thirties.

Memories of the Great Depression were still fresh when 'The Grapes of Wrath,' came out in 1939. The novel portrayed the terrible poverty and injustice suffered by migrant labourers in America during the period.

The Joad family leave Oklahoma in search of a better future.They make their way to California.

The abuse, misery, and injustice suffered by the Joad family shocked American readers, raised a controversy, and later, the book became a bestseller.



For Whom the Bell Tolls

Why is 'For Whom the Bell Tolls,' a great novel?

Ernest Hemingway wrote the novel, 'For Whom the Bell Tolls,' but he borrowed the title from a poet's lines. John Donne, the poet had written, 'And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee'.

'For Whom the Bell Tolls,' is one of the best works of Ernest Hemingway. Hemingway wrote the novel in Havana. 'The Sun Also Rises,' 'The Old Man and the Sea', and 'A Farewell to Arms,' are some of the other great works of Ernest Hemingway.

Hemingway drew upon his experiences in the Spanish Civil War to write this novel. The characters in the novel range from the purely fictional, to the completely real. Robert Jordan, the hero of the novel, is a young American in the International Brigades. His regiment is attached to a republican guerrilla unit. The novel is set in the Spanish Civil War.

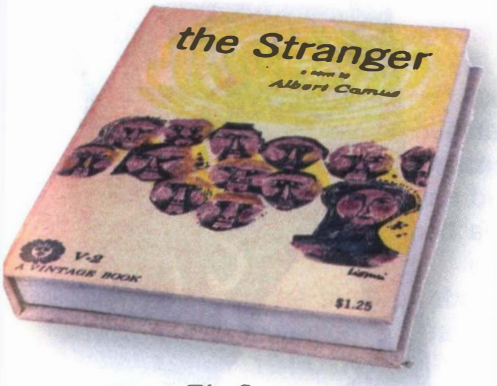
Robert Jordan is a dynamiter. During an assault on the city of Segovia, Robert Jordan is ordered to blow up a bridge.

Why is the 'The Stranger,' regarded as an outstanding novel?

The writings of Albert Camus are heavily influenced by his philosophy. 'The Stranger,' or 'The Outsider,' is no exception.

The absurdity of the human condition is highlighted in the novel. So too, is existentialism; the human responsibility to find a meaning in life.

Only 4400 copies were printed in the French first edition. The book was not a bestseller. However, it



The Stranger

received praise from critics. Jean-Paul Sartre, the well known French writer, wrote a timely article on the day before the publication of the novel.

Meursault, a French Algerian, is the chief character. He is apathetic and indifferent by nature. After taking part in his mother's funeral, he kills an Arab, he is acquainted with, in the French Algiers.

Interestingly, the murder is done apathetically. The story is a first person narrative by Meursault. It is divided into two parts- before the murder, and after. Raymond, Marie Cardona, Salamano, and the murdered Arab are among the important characters in 'The Stranger.' Stuart Gilbert, first translated it into English in 1946.

Life of Pi

'The Stranger,' is part of a flashback scene in the celebrated film, 'Life of Pi.' In the scene, Pi, the principal character reads from a French language copy of 'The Stranger.'

Why is it said that 'Animal Farm,' made history?

'All animals are equal, but some animals more equal than others' is a famous line from 'Animal Farm'.

'Animal Farm,' is a novella written by George Orwell. The novella is an allegory. The author himself described the book as a story about the series of events that resulted in the Russian Revolution of 1917 and of Soviet Union under Stalin.

The book was written between November 1943 and February, 1944. It was the time of World War II, and England had an alliance with Soviet Union. The cold war followed, and this change in international relations was partly responsible for the success of 'Animal Farm,' at the time.

Originally the book was titled, 'Animal Farm- a Fairy Story.' The subtitle was removed in later editions. This classic was selected by Time magazine as one of the 100 best English novels. 'Animal Farm,' stands 31st in the Modern Library List of Best 20th century novels.

Animal Farm

Why is it said that 'The Plague,' by Albert Camus is a novel with several meanings?

'The Plague,' is a tale of human endurance in the face of a deadly epidemic. The novel was written by Albert Camus, and published in France in 1947.

On one hand, the story is about the German occupation of France from 1940 to 1944. France was completely isolated from the rest of the world. In the story, the plague-hit city of Oram is forced to close its gates.

This story is told through the character Rieux. However, Rieux does not function as a first-person narrator. Rather, he disguises himself, and does not reveal who he is.

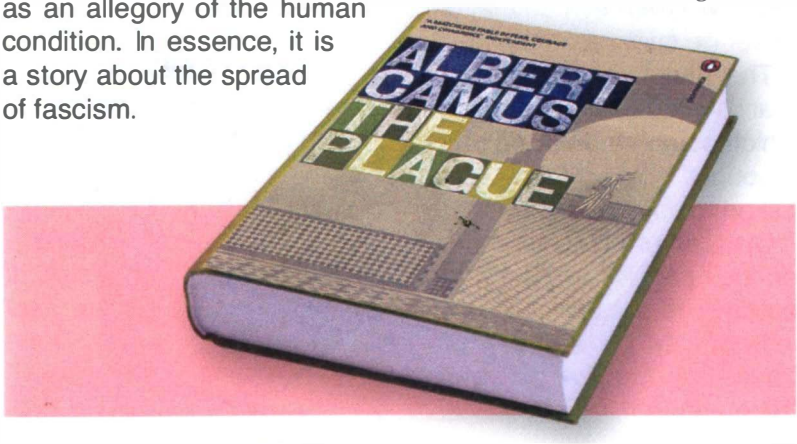
'The Plague,' can also be taken as an allegory of the human condition. In essence, it is a story about the spread of fascism.

Left to Write

Albert Camus was also an enthusiastic soccer player. However, tuberculosis stopped his trips to the soccer field, at the age of seventeen.

● *Sneha Rao*

The Plague



Why is 'Nineteen Eighty- Four,' a thought provoking novel?

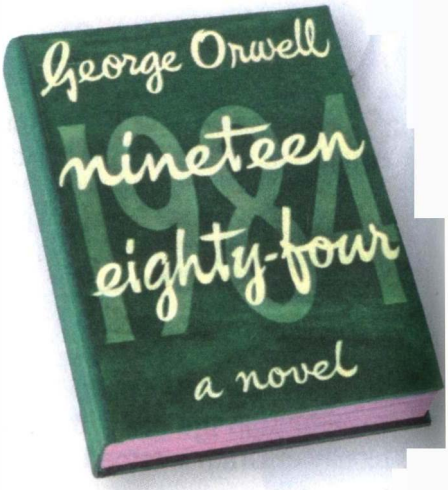
'Nineteen Eighty-Four,' was written in 1949, by George Orwell. This prophetic novel is a classic novel in content, plot, and style.

The book was selected by Time magazine in 2005 as one of the 100 best English-language novels. The novel portrays the evils of a totalitarian state.

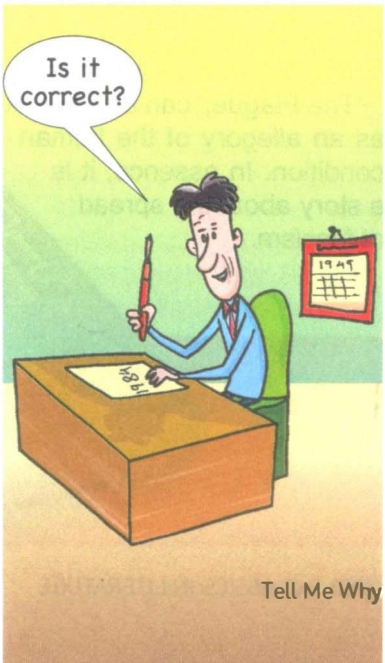
The novel is set in Airstrip One. Winston Smith lives in a totalitarian state which includes most of the English-speaking world. The party and the Big Brother control everything. They watch the actions of the citizens through an ever present television screen that can never be switched off.

The people live in constant fear of committing some act which could be reported to the 'Thought Police.' Citizens are asked to spy on one another.

Children are taught to report on their parents to the thought police. The end of freedom and individuality is brilliantly portrayed by George Orwell in 'Nineteen Eighty-Four.'



Nineteen Eighty-Four



Dark Horse

Benjamin Disraeli penned a novel titled 'The Young Duke.' In the novel, a dark horse emerges as the surprise winner at the races. The novel gave rise to the phrase 'dark horse'.

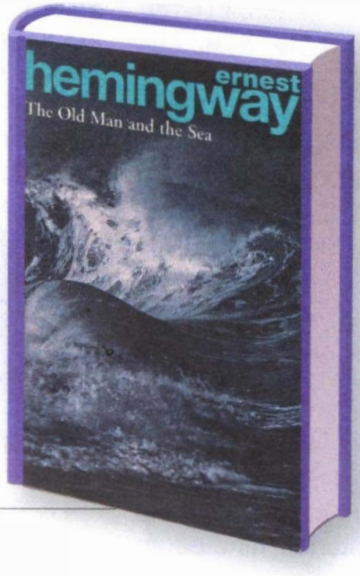
Why is 'The Old Man and the Sea,' a classic tale?

'The Old Man and the Sea,' won the Pulitzer Prize for Ernest Hemingway in 1953. The novel was published in 1952.

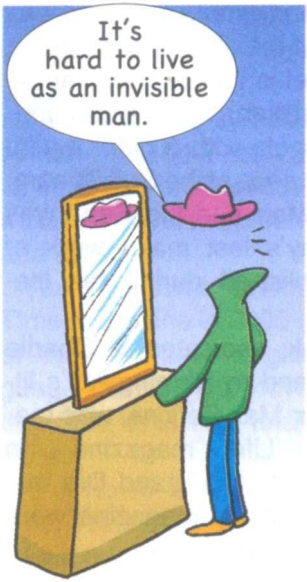
The themes of courage in defeat, and victory over loss, are played out in this novel. Hemingway wrote in a stark and simple style and was a master of the short sentence.

The novel is the story of Santiago, a fisherman, and his life- and-death struggle with a giant marlin in the deep seas of the Gulf Stream. 'The Old Man and the Sea,' was Hemingway's last major work of fiction published during his lifetime.

The book, dedicated to Charlie Scribner, and to Hemingway's literary editor Max Perkins, was featured in Life magazine on September 1, 1952, and five million copies of the magazine were sold in two days.



The Old Man and the Sea



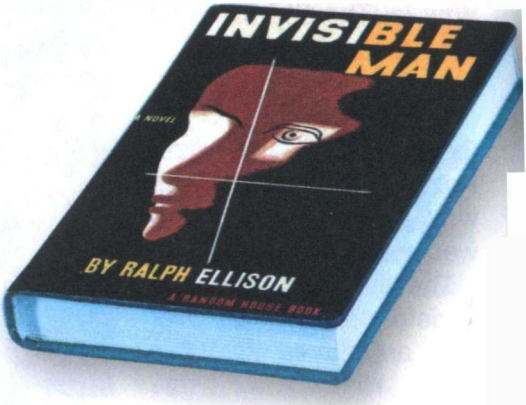
Why is 'Invisible Man,' regarded as a unique novel?

'Invisible Man,' is a landmark novel about African Americans. Ralph Ellison was the author, and Random House was the publisher. The book came out in 1952. 'Invisible Man,' won widespread appreciation and the US National Book Award for Fiction in 1953. The book stands nineteenth on the Modern library list of 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century.

The book highlights social and intellectual issues facing African-Americans in the early part of the twentieth century. Black Nationalism, and Booker T. Washington's reformist racial policies are dealt with.

'Invisible Man,' also explores issues of individuality and personal identity. Ellison adopted an experimental attitude in writing the novel.

The story is told from the narrator's present, looking back into his past. Thus, the narrator has hindsight in how his story is told, as he is already aware of the outcome. The narrator says that he is an invisible man, at the beginning of the novel.



Invisible Man

Why is 'Waiting for Godot,' considered as a unique play?

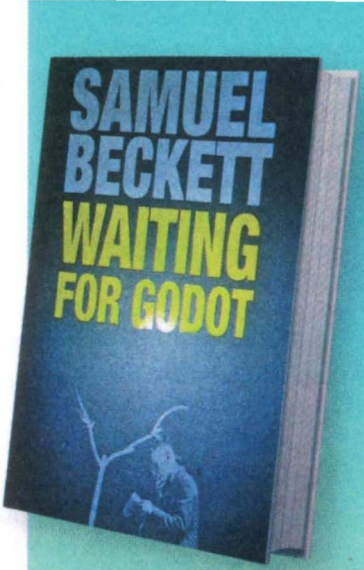
'Waiting for Godot,' was voted 'the most significant English language play of the twentieth century'.

The play is the greatest work of Samuel Beckett. Beckett wrote the play in French between 9th October, 1948 and 29th January, 1949. Titled, 'En attendant Godot,' the play was translated into English by Beckett himself.

The full name of the play in English is 'Waiting for Godot: A tragicomedy in two acts.' The first show of the play took place on 5th January 1953, in the Theatre de Babylone, Paris. Roger Blin, the director of the play, also doubled up as an actor.

Blin played Pozzo in the drama. Two characters in the play, Vladmir and Estragon, wait for an incredibly long time for Godot. But, Godot does not arrive. The play is a puzzling one. The identity of Godot is a secret. Throughout 'Waiting for Godot,' the audience may encounter philosophical, classical, and biographical references.

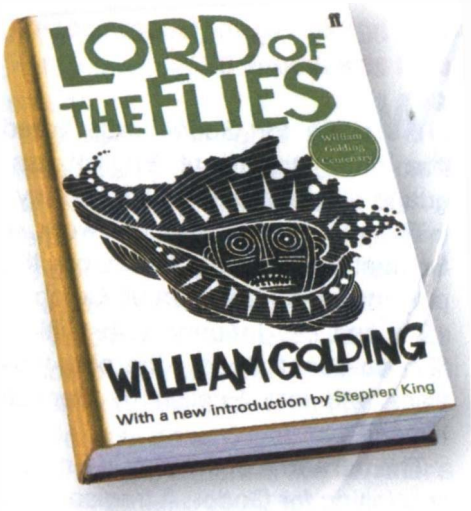
'Waiting for Godot,' is regarded as the leading example of the Theatre of the Absurd. The Theatre of the Absurd rose from the Absurdist philosophy of Albert Camus.



Waiting for Godot

Mayan Story

'The Three Codices' written in hieroglyphs on bark paper form the sole record of Mayan history, in existence. 'The Three Codices,' rest in European cities.



Lord of the Flies

Why is 'Lord of the Flies,' considered a dark novel?

'Lord of the Flies,' is a novel about evil. William Golding, who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1983, wrote this classic. The novel is a reaction to the novel 'The Coral,' Island by R. M. Ballantyne.

The cold blooded acts of the Nazis during World War II horrified Golding, and he wrote 'Lord of the Flies.'

The plot of the novel is quite simple. A few children are being moved to safety from England to Australia, by plane. The plane crashes on a tropical island. Not a single adult

survives the crash. The survived group of children create a little world of evil, in the island. The book portrays their descent into savagery.

Symbolism, is a feature of this novel. Golding believes that Man is by nature, evil, and he uses the novel to convey this idea.

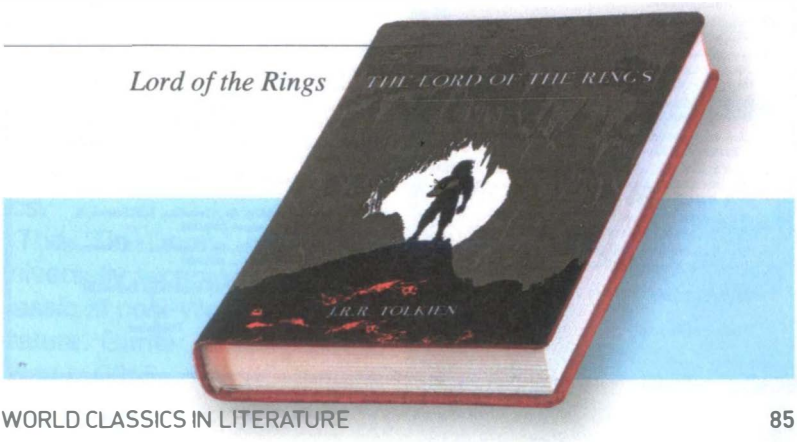
Why is it said that 'The Lord of the Rings,' is a high fantasy novel?

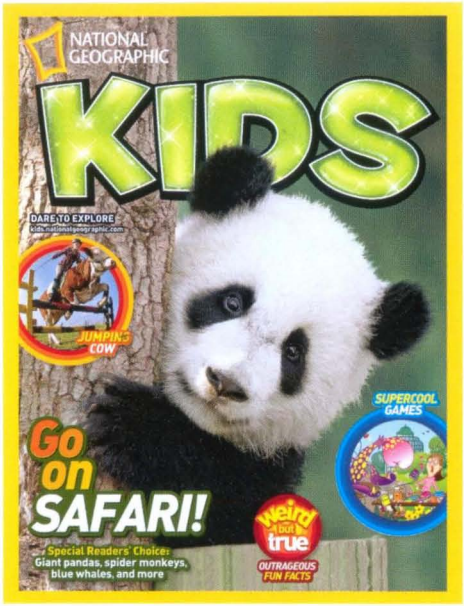
'The Lord of the Rings,' is placed second on the list of best-selling novels of all time. J.R.R. Tolkien, the English author wrote 'The Lord of the Rings.' He started this novel as a sequel to his fantasy novel, 'The Hobbit.'

However, the novel grew much bigger and richer than Tolkien had anticipated. He wrote it in several stages from 1937 to 1949. The 'Lord of the Rings,' is a novel in three volumes. 'The Fellowship of the Ring', 'The Two Towers', and 'The Return of the King,' were published from 29th July, 1954 to 20th October, 1955.

The novel takes its name from the Dark Lord Sauron. This evil mastermind created the first ring in an earlier age to rule the other rings. The novel begins in Shire, a hobbit land, which is quite similar to the English countryside.

This epic fantasy novel has been translated into 38 languages, and reprinted many times.





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Soon to hit the stands

Why is 'The Tin Drum,' considered as a classic of post World War II literature?

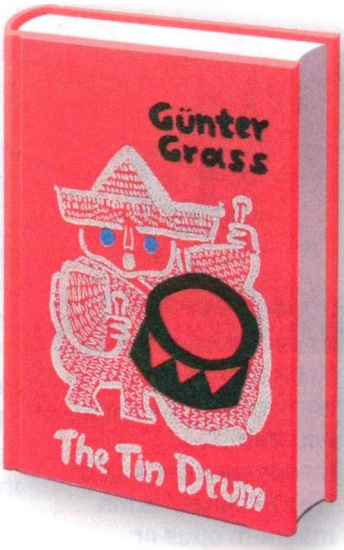
'The Tin Drum,' of Gunter Grass was a resounding success. Published in 1959, The 'Tin Drum,' is the first book of the Danzig Trilogy.

In 1979, a film based on the novel was produced. The film bagged the Palme d'Or, in the same year. The movie went on to win the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1980.

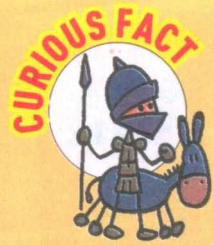
Oskar Matzerath narrates the story while he is held in a mental hospital from 1952-1954. There are three books in the novel and three characters too. Oskar Matzerath, Maria Truczinski and Dorothea are the three characters.

Myth, legend, and fable are part of the novel. So, it is an example of magic realism. At the same time, it conveys powerful opinions about politics.

The 'Tin Drum,' has been universally accepted as a great classic of post-World War II literature. Gunter Grass passed away in 2015.



The Tin Drum



'The Prophet'

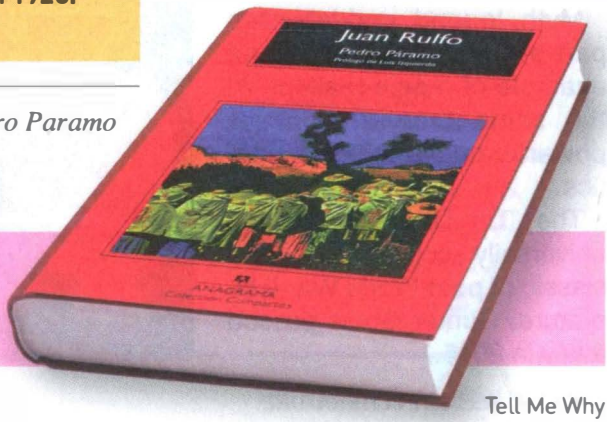
Kahil Gibran was born in Lebanon, and was admired throughout the world. 'The Prophet,' is his magnum opus or masterpiece. This inspirational book is a collection of poetic essays that are both spiritual and philosophical. 'The 'Prophet,' was published in 1923.

Why is 'Pedro Paramo,' one of a kind book?

'Pedro Paramo,' is a Latin American classic penned by Juan Rulfo. The book came out in 1955.

The novel has a dream-like quality. The twin tales of a man's search for his father, and his father's fixation with a woman, are told in 'Pedro Paramo'. The novel is a true-to-life description of life in rural Mexico at the end of the nineteenth century, and in the early years of the twentieth.

During this period, far reaching social and economic changes in Mexico led to the migration of peasants from ranches and villages to urban slums. In the cities, they had no land to farm, nor did they get jobs to make a living. The novel changes focus from thoughts



Pedro Paramo

to memory, and from the world of living, to the world of the dead. This haunting tale in 124 pages is one of the most widely read novels in Latin America.

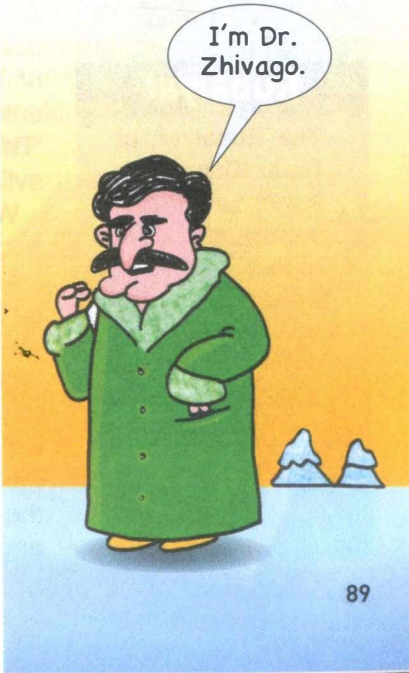
Doctor Zhivago

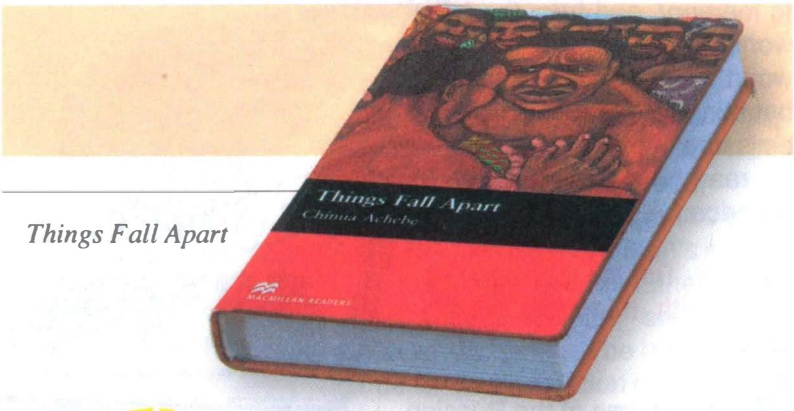
Why is 'Doctor Zhivago,' a novel with historical significance?

Set in the time of the Russian Revolution, 'Doctor Zhivago,' became a classic of world literature.

Boris Pasternak authored this novel about Yuri Zhivago, a poet and a physician. The novel highlights the excesses of the Revolution. The novel has historical significance, as it deals with Marxism and Socialism. A host of characters from different sections of the society people the novel.

The novel covers a wide range of subjects from the hostility of the Russian winter, to a man's divided love for his wife and lover. A poet in exile, idealists attempting to change the world, and the beauty of Russian forests and rivers, can be found in the pages of this book.





Things Fall Apart

Rubaiyat

The 'Rubaiyat,' of Omar Khayyam is a poem of amazing beauty and spiritual meaning. Edward Fizgerald translated the poem into English.

● *Dev Nath*

Why is the 'Things Fall Apart,' a post colonial work of art?

'Things Fall Apart,' is the English novel of an African writer. Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian, wrote this post colonial novel in 1958. This was one of the first African novels to receive critical praise from round the world. 'Things Fall Apart,' is a part of school syllabi in African countries.

William Heinemann published the book in the U.K. Okonkwo, an Igbo leader and local wrestling champion is the hero of the novel. The story unfolds in the fictional Nigerian village of Umuofia. 'Things Fall Apart,' has three sections. The first deals with the culture and history of the Igbo. The last two sections portray the influence of British colonialism, and Christian missionaries on the

Igbo society. The sequel of 'Things Fall Apart,' was published in 1960. The sequel was originally a part of Achebe's 'Arrow of God,' which was published in 1964.

'Things Fall Apart,' is popular throughout the world. The name of the novel is borrowed from 'The Second Coming,' a famous poem by W.B.Yeats.

Why is it said that Heller's 'Catch 22,' reflects the sentiments of a generation?

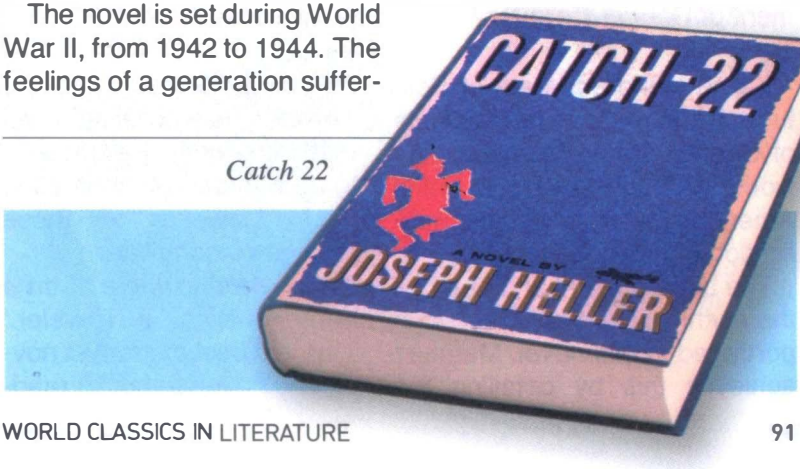
'Catch 22,' is a classic novel that treats war as collective madness. Joseph Heller wrote 'Catch 22'. He began writing it in 1953; and the novel was first published in 1961.

The novel is set during World War II, from 1942 to 1944. The feelings of a generation suffering the aftermath of World War II is put across in the novel. The story centres around the efforts of an US airman to survive the insanity of war, following his return from the front.

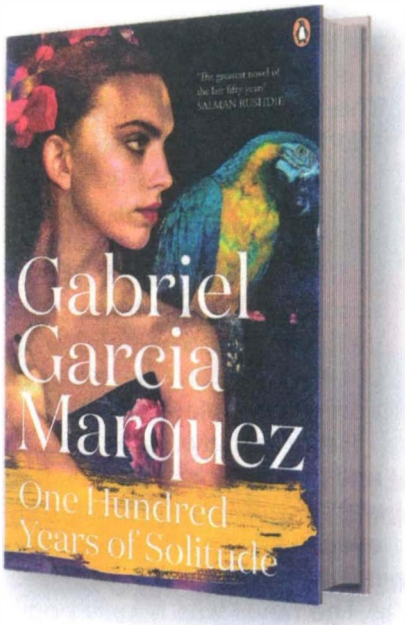
'Catch 22,' begins as a set of conflicting requirements according to which mentally unfit airmen had no need to fly, but they couldn't be excused from flying duties either.

Heller employs black humour and peculiar logic to argue that war and military are insane. He even suspects that modern life is insane as well.

The novel was hugely popular. So much so, that 'Catch 22,' has come to mean a sticky situation in which any move would complicate things further.



Catch 22



One Hundred Years of Solitude

history of the Buendia family.

Macondo is a reflection of Latin America and the Buendia family of humanity. Life, death, love, hate, riches poverty, war, and revolution are written about with simple brilliance.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982.

Why is 'One Hundred Years of Solitude,' the crowning achievement of Gabriel Marquez?

'One Hundred years of Solitude, is the magical masterpiece of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The world was introduced to Latin American literature with the publication of this book in 1967.

The birth, growth, and death of the mythical town of Macondo is portrayed in this novel. Marquez achieves this by detailing the

Why is it said that 'If on a winter's night a traveler,' is a post modernist work?

'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler,' is a puzzling novel that introduces the readers to a number of interesting plots. However all these plots are incomplete.

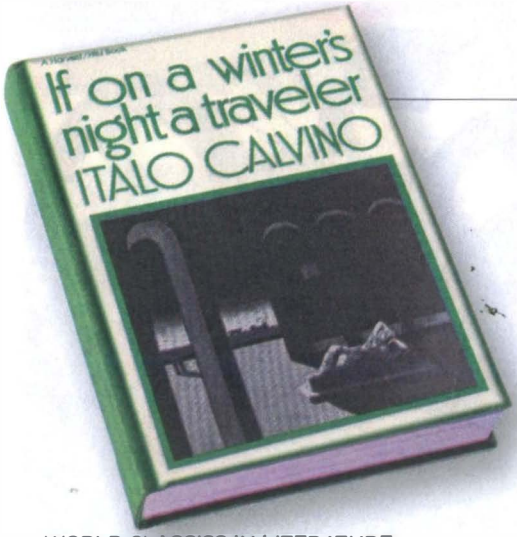
Italo Calvino wrote 'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler.' This is a post modernist novel. The novel is about a read-

er attempting to read a novel called 'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler.'

There are two sections in each chapter. The first section of each chapter is in the second person. Detailed in the first section is the process the reader goes through to try and read the next chapter of the book he is reading. The second part of each chapter is about a new book.

However, the second part is about a book completely different from the ones in the previous chapters.

William Weaver translated the book into English, and it was published in 1981. The first chapter deals with reading and it is then divided into 22 passages.



If on a Winter's Night a Traveler

Opinions

'The Telegraph' described 'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler,' as a 'playful postmodernist puzzle and ranked it 69th in a list of '100 novels everyone should read', in 2009.

● *Radha Nair*

The Classics of India will be presented in a separate issue, to be published in future.

PHOTO QUIZ 3

Here's a contest for our readers.
Identify the SCIENTISTS, from the photos given here.
All you need to do is send us an email naming each one with the proper number.
(PLEASE GIVE YOUR POSTAL ADDRESS ALSO IN THE E-MAIL)
You are also welcome to send your answers by post.
Ten winners will be awarded prizes.
In case there are more than ten correct entries, the winners will be chosen by lot.

FOR 10 LUCKY WINNERS

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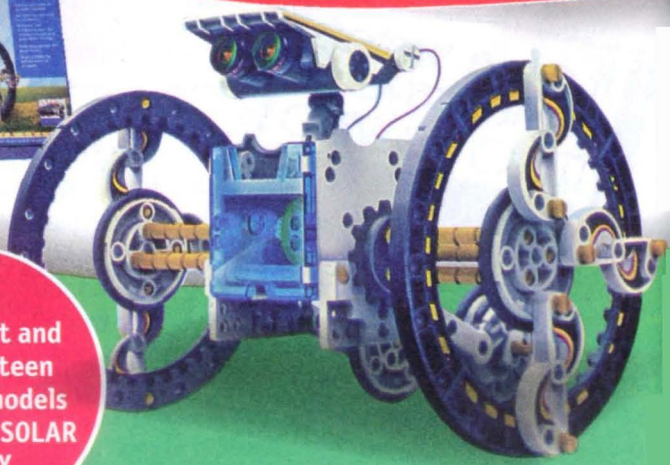
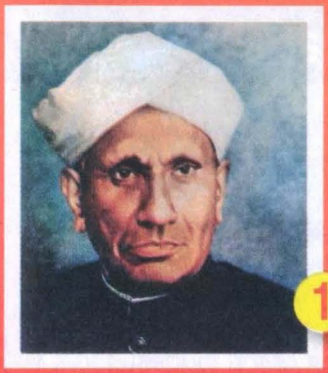
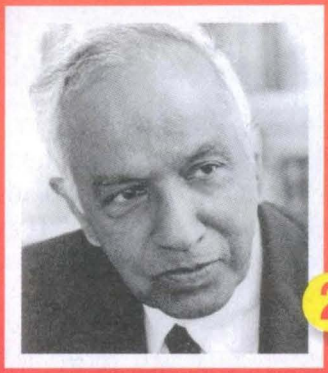
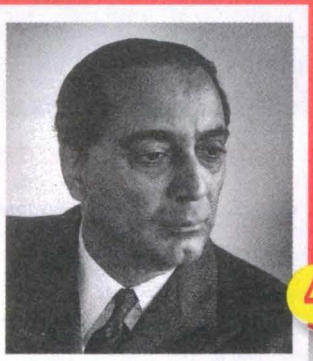


Build Solar Robot and other thirteen different models powered by SOLAR ENERGY







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Corrections & Clarifications

A.N. Keerthi Saagar, Shimoga, Karnataka, has pointed out a mistake in the February issue of Tell Me Why, Giants of the sea.

In page 9, it is wrongly written that fish move its tail vertically, but whale's tail move horizontally. In fact, the fish moves its tail horizontally while whale moves it's tail vertically.

Nitin Shah, Lucknow, has an add-on information to the same issue. He writes that apart from being the largest animal, blue whale is one of the loudest, too.

Thank you readers for your valuable feedback.

- Editor

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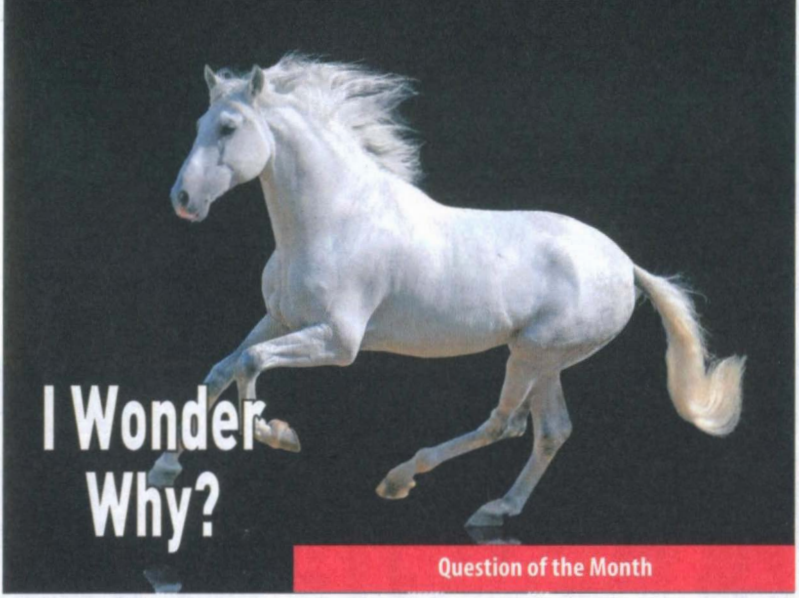


I Wonder Why?

Question of the Month

Question sent by:
Debargha Bhadra on email

Send us your questions
E mail: **tellmewhy@mmp.in**

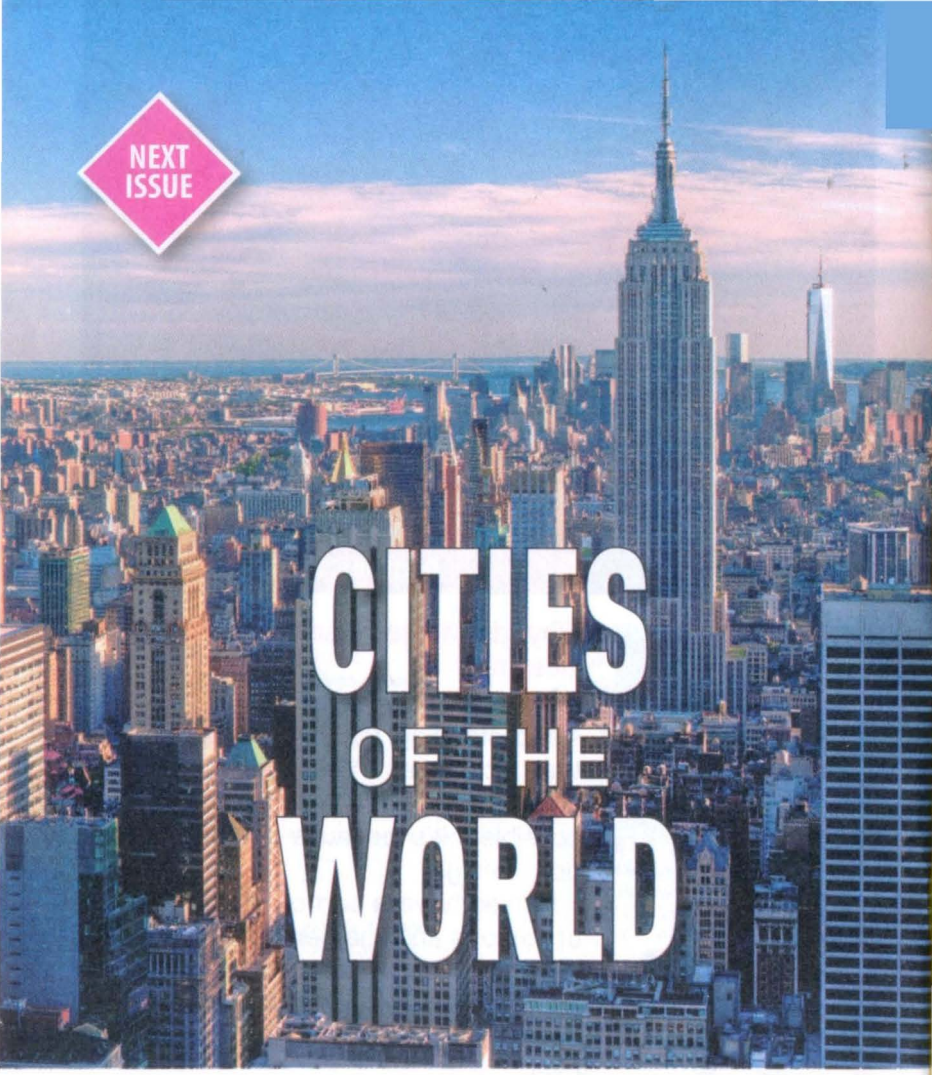
Why do horses keep standing while sleeping?

It would be uncomfortable for you to sleep standing up, but the opposite is true for horses. You can often find a horse sleeping standing up. How is this possible? It's because of their special body design.

Horses have a sort of internal system of tendons and ligaments called the stay apparatus. This system lets a horse lock its legs in position, so that it can relax its muscles, and doze off without keeling over.

Even though they're able to snooze standing up, horses apparently need to lie down for rest and sleep for at least some of the time.

● *Indhu Thomas*



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